Liberty

JULY 1, 1944
10c

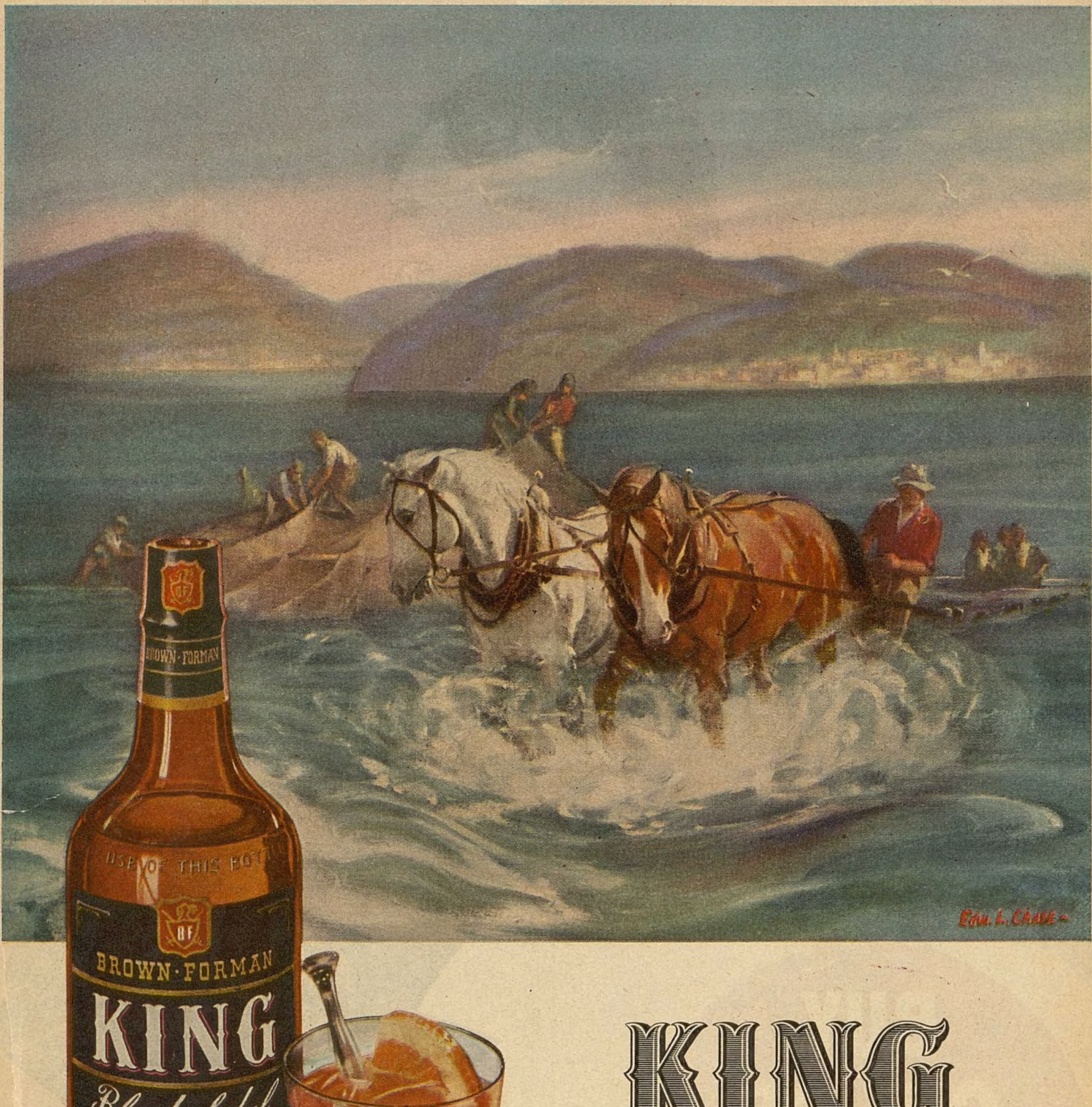
Book: Limit of Darkne
Poignant Novel of
Air War

F.D.R.'s PART IN WAR STRATEGY

BUY
ONE OF
THESE BONDS
TODAY

21
79 R

BE RIGHT–DRINK LIGHT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USE OF THIS BOTTLE
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BLENDED WHISKY
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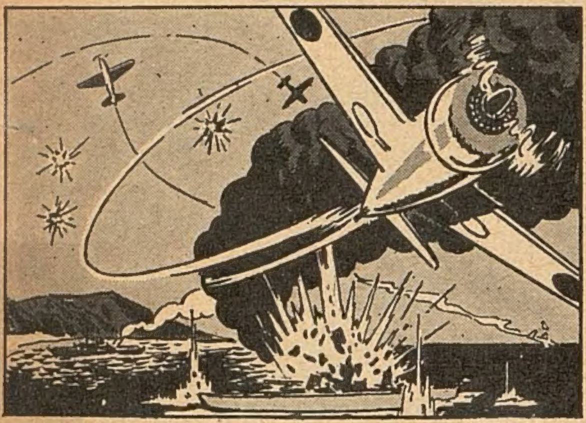
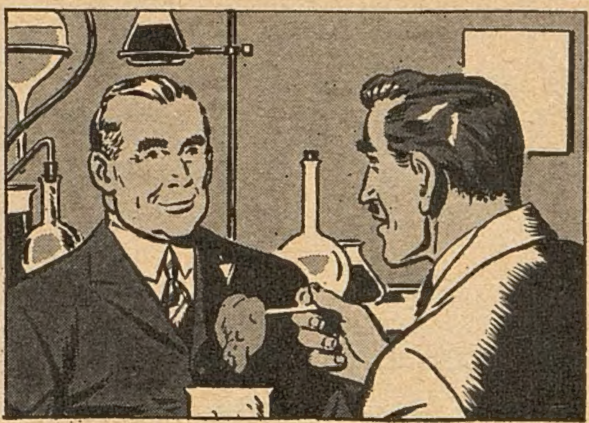
MOVING PICTURE OF THE BEST TIRE BUILT TODAY

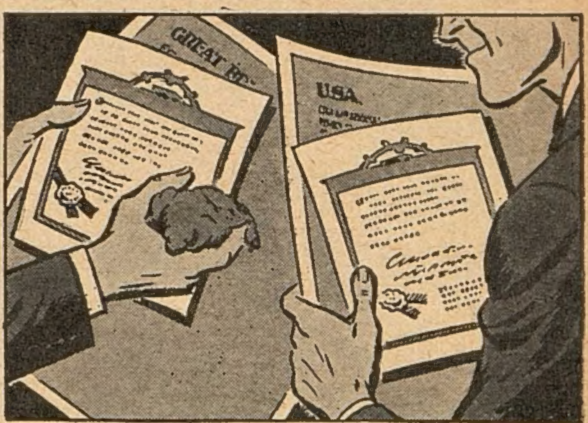
A STORY OF GOODYEAR RESEARCH



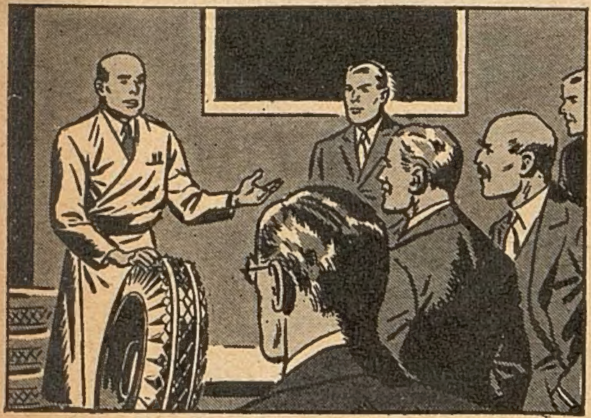
THE CRASH OF BOMBS *on Pearl Harbor began the attack that, with the swift fall of the Far East plantations, cut America's rubber lifeline and brought the world's most motorized nation face to face with catastrophe as its rubber reserve dwindled.*



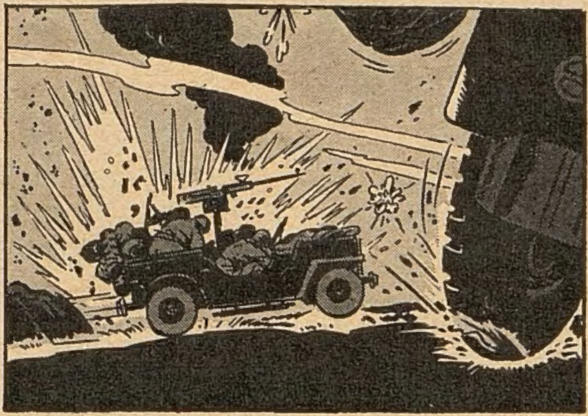
FORTUNATELY, NEARLY 20 YEARS EARLIER, *Goodyear research chemists had begun experiments looking toward production of a synthetic rubber from hydrocarbons common in the United States, as a possible source of rubber free from foreign control.*



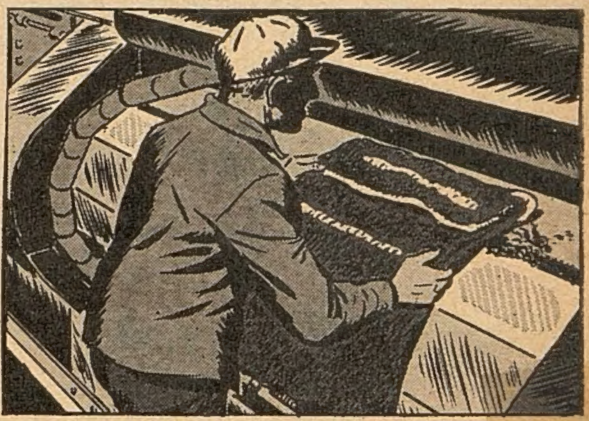
U.S. AND BRITISH PATENTS *covering synthetic rubber manufacture were granted to Goodyear, following the development in 1927 of an improved process resembling today's method. (To help win the war, Goodyear gave broad patent rights to the government.)*



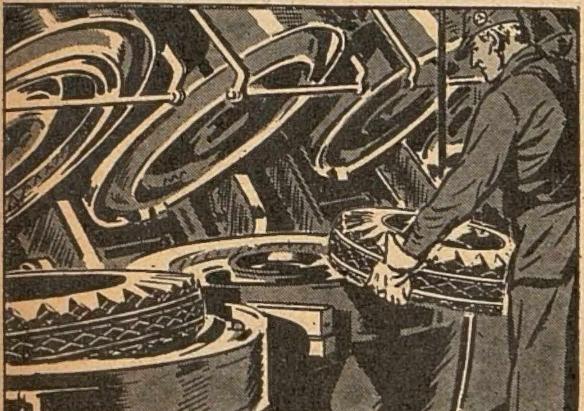
THE FIRST ALL-SYNTHETIC RUBBER TIRE *built in America was made by Goodyear in 1937 from a special synthetic developed by Goodyear, in many respects similar to that produced in government plants today. It outwore the best European synthetic tires.*



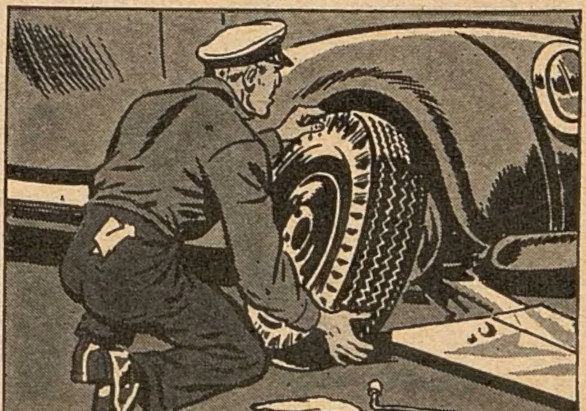
FIRST TIRES FOR THE ARMY, *entirely made from synthetic rubber produced in these new government-owned plants, were built by Goodyear and delivered early in 1943. In front-line service they gave excellent account of themselves.*



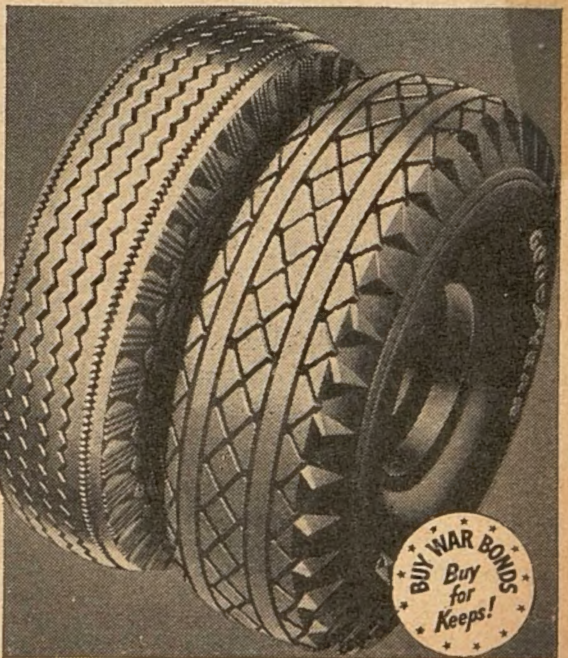
AMERICA'S FIRST COMMERCIAL SYNTHETIC RUBBER PLANT. *After several years of pilot plant operations the first complete commercial unit plant for manufacturing synthetic rubber was built and put into operation by Goodyear in 1941.*



SYNTHETIC TIRES FOR CIVILIANS *went into production in all Goodyear tire plants in 1943, as part of the government's program to keep America's passenger cars rolling in 1944. These tires are now available for essential driving.*



TODAY THE DANGER FADES *as new synthetic tires replace prewar "bald" treads. Motorists find Goodyears give standout performance; and that the veteran Goodyear dealer organization is most experienced and best equipped to give service that insures best wear.*



THIS TWENTY-YEAR RECORD OF LEADERSHIP IN DEVELOPING AND IMPROVING SYNTHETIC RUBBER IS THE REASON GOODYEAR SYNTHETIC RUBBER TIRES ARE NOW THE BEST YOU CAN BUY. IT EXPLAINS WHY TODAY, AS FOR THE PAST 29 YEARS: ***MORE PEOPLE RIDE ON GOODYEAR TIRES THAN ON ANY OTHER KIND!***

GOODYEAR

THE GREATEST NAME IN RUBBER

YOUR HOSPITAL AND DOCTOR BILLS PAID

3¢ a day

HOSPITALIZATION PLAN

Pays up to...

$1600.00

Cash Benefits in Any One Year

Covers!

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- ★ DOCTOR OR SURGEON
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Painted by Del Holcomb

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LEE WAGNER, CIRCULATION MANAGER

This American is not expected to buy an extra War Bond in the 5TH WAR LOAN

But we are.

For each of us here at home, the job now is to buy extra Bonds—100, 200, even 500 dollars worth if possible.

Many of us can do much more than we ever have before.

When the Victory Volunteer comes to you and asks you to buy extra Bonds, think how much you'd give to have this War over and done.

Then remember that you're not *giving* anything. You're simply *lending* money—putting it in the best investment in the world.

5TH WAR LOAN

Let's Go . . . for the Knockout Blow!

LIBERTY MAGAZINE

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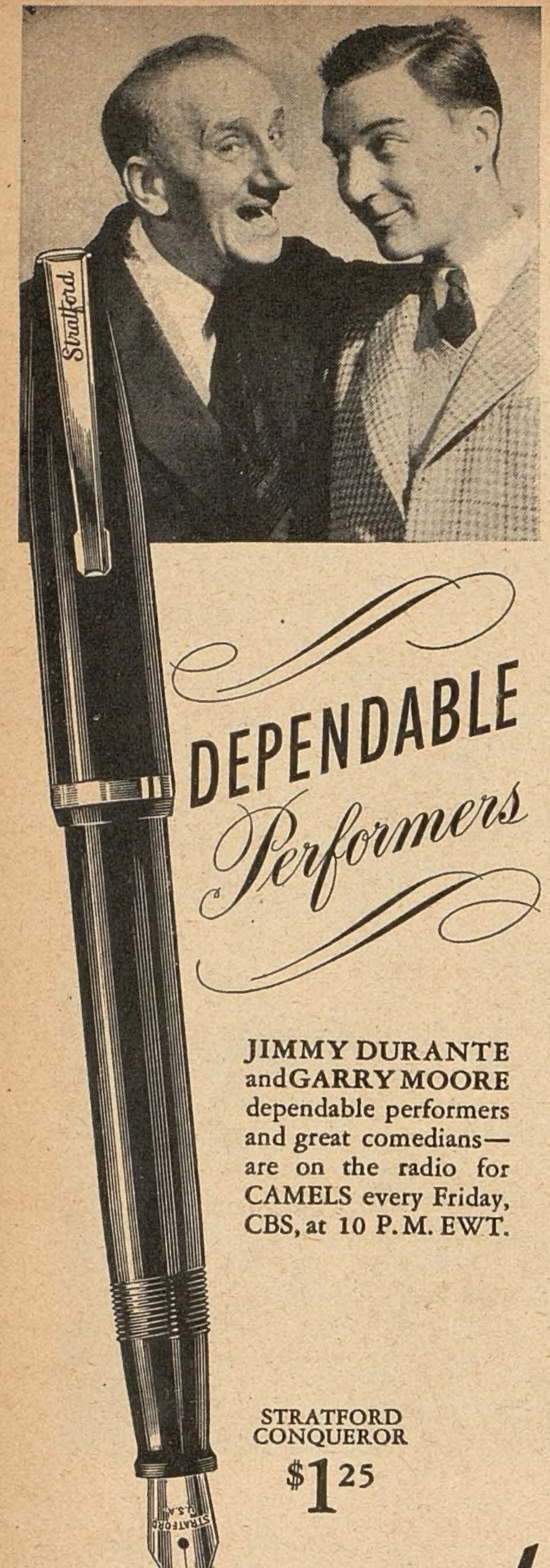

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VOX POP

"The Voice of the People"

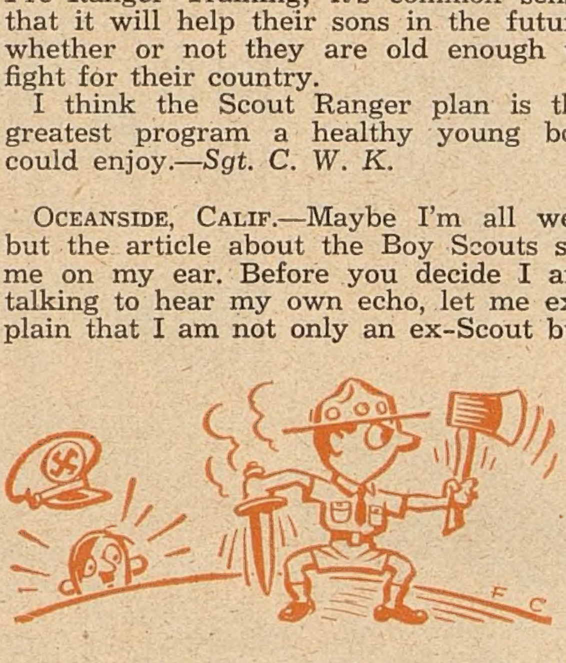
RANGER TRAINING FOR BOY SCOUTS?

PANDO, COLO.—Your article The Boy Scouts Get Tough by Keith Monroe (May 20 Liberty) has brought back pleasant memories. When I was old enough to join I didn't have the same opportunities the boys have today, but I did have all the fun and excitement a boy could hope for.

It has been proved numerous times by men in my organization that Scouts have an advantage over other boys in the Army. I am in the Field Artillery. My experience with scouting has taught me to meet many hardships and problems. I cannot understand why parents should object to the Pre-Ranger Training; it's common sense that it will help their sons in the future whether or not they are old enough to fight for their country.

I think the Scout Ranger plan is the greatest program a healthy young boy could enjoy.—*Sgt. C. W. K.*

OCEANSIDE, CALIF.—Maybe I'm all wet, but the article about the Boy Scouts set me on my ear. Before you decide I am talking to hear my own echo, let me explain that I am not only an ex-Scout but have put in two years' service in the Southwest Pacific. During that time, I was in several campaigns in the Solomons with the Second Marine Raider Brigade. Now I am in the hospital with malaria.



It seems to me (and the fellows here in the ward agree with me) that we are fighting so that, among other things, our little brothers can grow up the same way we did. We want to keep the war just as far from them as possible, so that they can be just as happy-go-lucky and carefree as we were.

Don't think I'm knocking scouting. I'm not. I realize the value of the training it gives. But wouldn't it be better for scouting to let its old principle suffice instead of laying the actual foundation for military training?—*Pfc. Davis Clifton.*

CLASS DISTINCTION

NEW ORLEANS, LA.—Was the author of Washington Is Undercrowded (May 20 Liberty) trying to stir up a hornets' nest or was he just careless in his statements? I refer to: "Washington is full of gold braid and lots of ordinary G. I.s too, who in their own way can be even more exciting."

The only thing lacking to make it really an insult to the enlisted men would have been to say "who in their own *crude* way."

Heaven knows there's enough discrimination in the armed forces favoring officers as against enlisted men, and there are already many girls who actually believe that if a man isn't an officer he isn't a gentleman. I think you'll find, proportionately, just as many "gentlemen" among enlisted men as you will among the officers. So why give the girls the idea that there is a difference in the men who wear gold braid and those who don't? Didn't someone say something about all men being created equal? And aren't we fighting for democracy?—*R. J. T., Y1/c U. S. N. R.*

HARSH WORDS FOR McGINNIS

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.—In regard to Vox Pop (April 29 Liberty), I think that Pfc. McGinnis is either trying hard for an M. D., or is just plain crazy. (No reflection on Miss Peters, of course.)

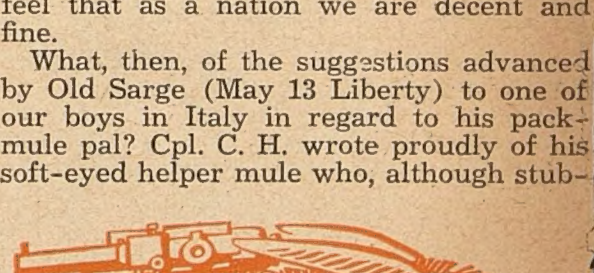
McGinnis, in my estimation, is being rather selfish in wanting to monopolize one gal. After all, there are lots of other fellows with different viewpoints on the subject Female. If you were to fulfill said soldier's request, you would soon be getting letters of the same nature as his from every doggie, swab-jockey and gyrene in the U. S. Forces, all mentioning a different fem.

I think that this is one matter in which the editor can be the only judge. The opposite sex is a touchy subject and should be left up to you.—*John Sharp, MN 3/c.*

A MULE IS AN ANIMAL WITH LONG FUNNY EARS

PORTLAND, ORE.—We Americans like to feel that as a nation we are decent and fine.

What, then, of the suggestions advanced by Old Sarge (May 13 Liberty) to one of our boys in Italy in regard to his pack-mule pal? Cpl. C. H. wrote proudly of his soft-eyed helper mule who, although stubborn now and then, is doing a real war job and is steady under fire. Then, Old Sarge suggested building a fire under Maud the Mule to make her get up and go.



Maybe this reply was intended to be "all in fun" but there won't be any fun in it for animals owned by hard, ignorant men who follow the suggestions. Here in

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Please send me your new booklet giving basic facts about new auto and personal liability insurance. I understand this request will not obligate me in any way.

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made with HERBSAINT
HERBSAINT
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A Specialty Liqueur
100 PROOF
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IMPORTERS AND RECTIFIERS
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And here's the famous New Orleans recipe! Fill a large glass with cracked ice, add a half teaspoon of simple syrup or sugar, two ounces of Herbsaint, two ounces of carbonated or plain water, stir vigorously with a spoon until glass is well frosted. Now remove most of the ice and enjoy Herbsaint's delectable smoothness.

America we have humane laws against such practices, and to advocate unkindness toward animals in foreign lands besmirches our national character. Surely there are enough coarse and brutal deeds in this war without advising their practice on one who is no hated savage enemy but a four-footed soldier bravely helping *our* boys win the fight.

Here's to Minturno Maud. May she always have a kind master.—*Charlotte Mish.*

NEEDLING SHANE

Beaumont, Calif.—In Ted Shane's Quizzical Crosswords in May 13 Liberty he asks, Question No. 52, "What's the sharpest town in Arizona?" And it works out "Needles." This is poor geography, my friend. The town of Needles is in San Bernardino County, California, just across the Colorado River from Arizona. Now is everybody straightened out? — *W. A. Brazie.*

DUNTS
PUZLER
F C

SUPERSENSITIVE

Santa Barbara, Calif.—I and many of my buddies have read the story The Courtship of Mike Blandish. We're sorry to see that this author has no more respect for the Marine Corps than to call a Marine "lowdown." Even in fiction it is entirely out of order. There has been much discussion by the fellows on this base of the phrase "lowdown Marine." It's used more than once in the story. We feel sure that either the author doesn't have the right impression of the Corps or that he doesn't care what he writes about the United States Marine Corps.—*Pfc. Robert Kerschner.*

You Marines can't claim that you don't have uncomplimentary "nicknames" for the boys in the Army and the Navy. But all kidding aside, no harm was meant.—Vox Pop Editor.

TO ERR IS HUMAN

San Diego, Calif.—Goody! Goody! Ted Shane made a mistake in the April 22 number. *More* in Spanish is not "muy" in my Spanish dictionary. I had no end of trouble trying to get the thing right by using the right Spanish word! But I love Shane. And when I read letters against him I jolly well know that those cranks can't solve one of the puzzles to save their necks!—(*Miss*) *Byrd Taft.*

Des Moines, Iowa. — I don't mean to gripe or to find fault with your magazine in general, but this week you put the Crossword Puzzle on the last page of the Book Condensation Story. The paper is a different kind and I wonder if any other cross-worders had the trouble I did when it came to erasing! Please put the puzzle in its old place at the back of the magazine!—*Clara B. Kubec.*

St. Paul, Minn.—I strenuously object to the placing of Ted Shane's puzzle on a page of the Book Condensation in Liberty. —(*Miss*) *L. McConnon.*

The boys in the armed forces tell us they like to get both the condensation and the Crossword puzzle. Putting them together seems the simplest way of pleasing them.—Vox Pop Editor.

Liberty
Book: BLESSED ARE THE MEEK
RUSSIA'S POSTWAR AIMS

NEXT WEEK

✓ BLESSED ARE THE MEEK

By Zofia Kossak

Liberty's Book Condensation

This is a colorful religious novel destined, we think, to take its place with The Robe and The Apostle as one of the great books of our time.

The book will remind you of a vivid tapestry into which the author has woven love, the adventure of the Crusades, and the significant and moving story of St. Francis of Assisi. Blessed Are the Meek is a best seller—and a Book of the Month selection.

✓ BUCKEYE BOWLES

By Aiken Welch

The thorniest job in the nation's capital is handled by a mild-mannered ex-ad man whose new techniques are successful with the public and Congress alike.

✓ TIDDLERS vs. TIRPITZ

By Lieutenant J. Burke Wilkinson, U. S. N. R.

Your heart will pound at this story of the handful of Britons in tiny subs who surprised the mighty Nazi battleship Tirpitz in her so-called "impregnable" hide-out.

✓ "ARCHIE SPEAKIN'—DUFFY AIN'T HERE"

By Robert W. Marks

The role of Archie, lovable mug of Duffy's Tavern, is right down Ed Gardner's adenoids. But his real life is screwier than his radio fiction. Come on in, Ed!

✓ RUSSIA'S POSTWAR AIMS

By Ralph Parker

Russia's foreign moves have aroused all kinds of fears and conjectures, but as this Moscow correspondent sees it, they fit into a neatly consistent policy.

✓ TANTALUM—WONDER METAL OF THE WAR

By Mabel Raef Putnam

Tantalum got its name because it tantalized the man who found it. But now it's doing sensational things and proving t be a rare metal in more ways than one

✓ THE FLIGHT OF THE BELL

By Moran Tudury

Big Dutch's pride in the Liberty Bell wa both terrible and wonderful. But Lydd staked her future on his word that it woul ring again some day!

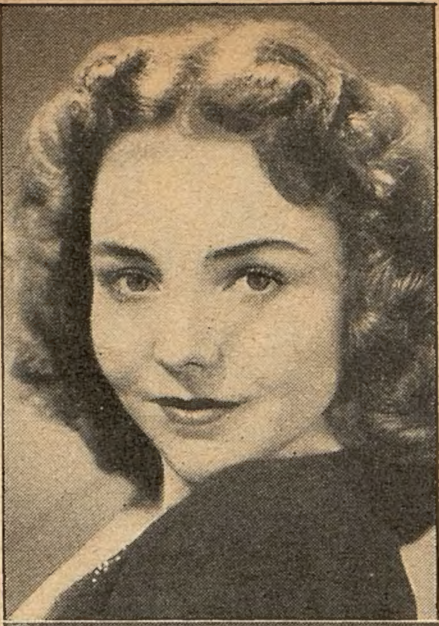
✓ FAT . . . SON OF FATM

By Eleanor Mercein

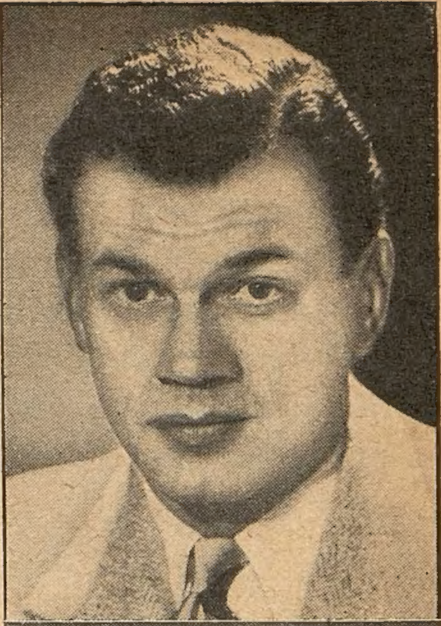
Kentucky chivalry gets a real workout Tunis, when, after a surprising reunion, th major solves a knotty problem in domest relations—and Clarence wins a read made family.

DAVID O.
SELZNICK
presents:

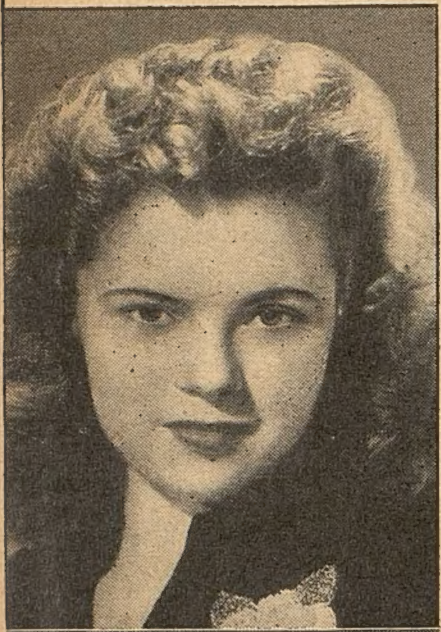
CLAUDETTE COLBERT



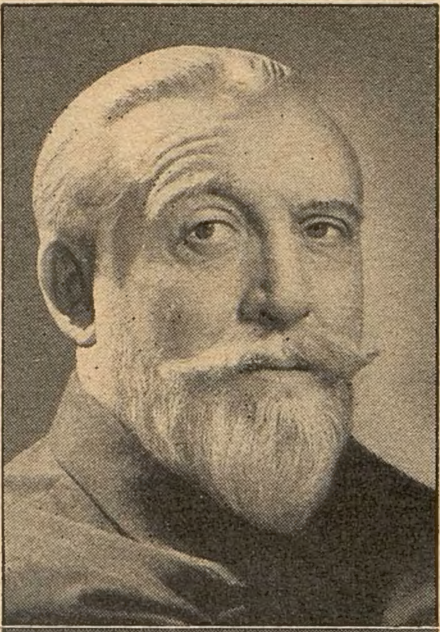
JENNIFER JONES



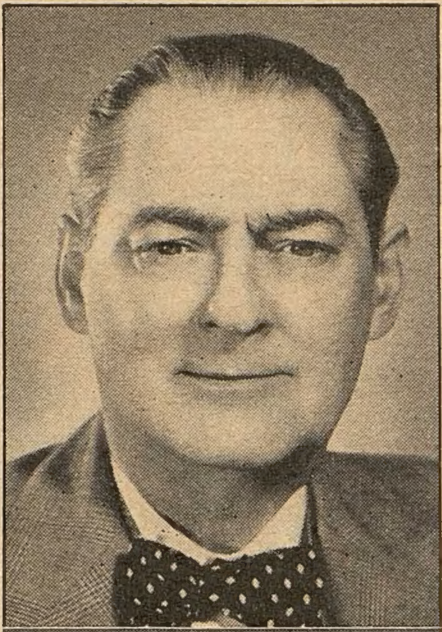
JOSEPH COTTEN



SHIRLEY TEMPLE



MONTY WOOLLEY



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ROBERT WALKER

The screen's most distinguished cast in

"Since You Went Away"

The producer's first picture since
"Gone With The Wind" and "Rebecca"

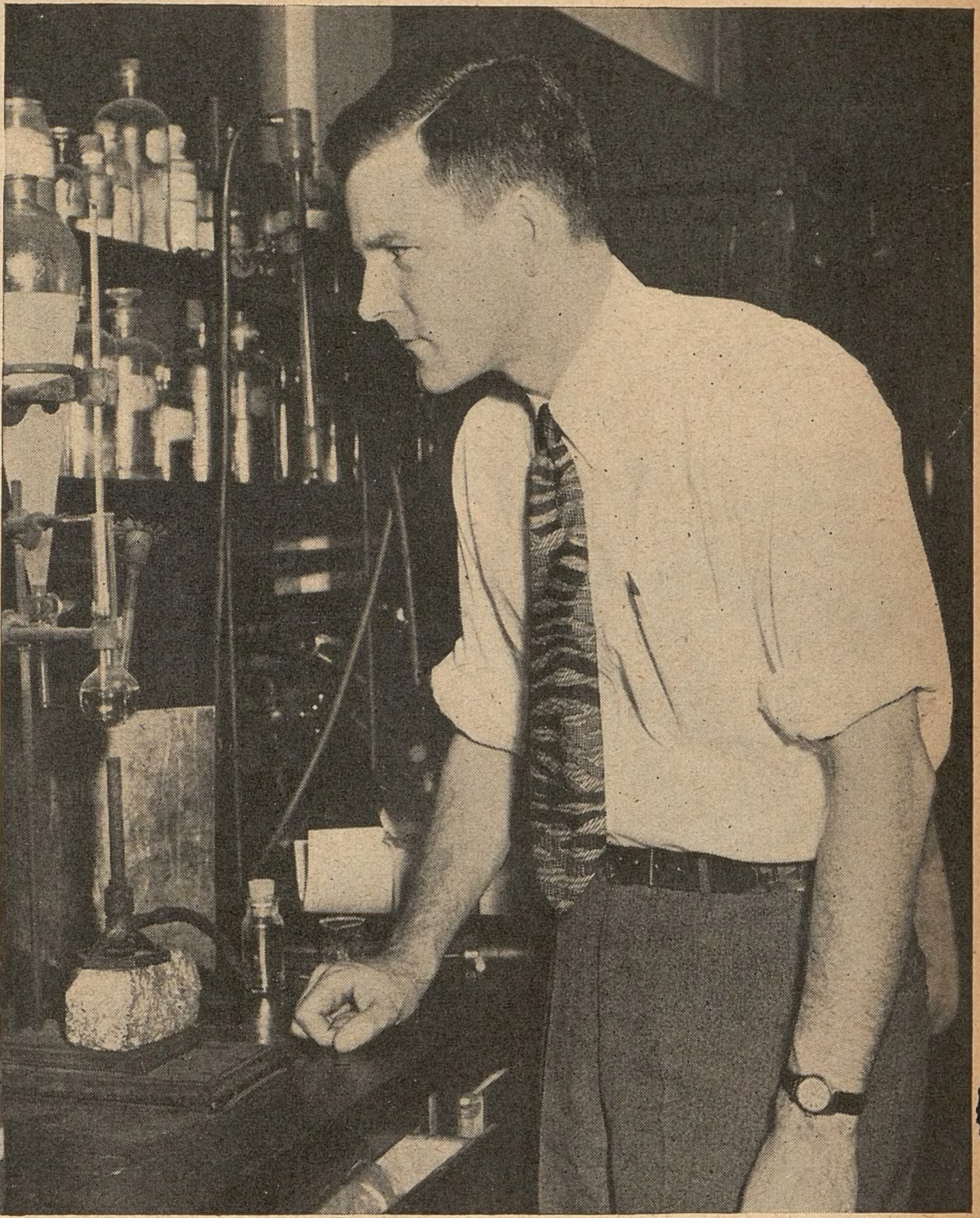
DIRECTED BY JOHN CROMWELL ... RELEASED THROUGH UNITED ARTISTS

THE MIRACLE of the FLYING SIEVES

An all-American invention keeps Allied planes flying even when their fuel tanks are riddled with bullets. Here's how the "Flaming Coffin" was outmoded

BY

PETER BRUCE MacLENNAN



It took Chemist Jim Merrill 300 tries to get the bugs out of the bullet-proof gas tank.

AN Allied bomber wobbles out of the sky like a stricken bird and bumps to rest at an airbase somewhere in England. Only a few hours ago it was a quarter-of-a-million-dollar beauty, as puffy proud as a pigeon. Now it looks more like ash-can material—tail in shreds, fuselage pumped full of holes, wings like tatter-work, and one engine shot out. But it has done its part: it has brought back its precious cargo of human life.

The flying sieve is one of the most startling phenomena of this war. Flyers of World War I will tell you that. In that war, seventy-five per cent of the planes brought down were shot down in flames when incendiary bullets pierced their fuel tanks. That's why they called them "flaming coffins" in grisly jest.

One burst of enemy machine-gun fire in the right place was enough to start the fatal leakage of gasoline and turn the plane into a white-hot blister as it whined to its death trailing a pall of funeral smoke. It was like a shot to the heart. The riddled fuel tank was the chief cause of air war casualties.

Yet today a single bomber may have as many as thirty fuel tanks—and full of such touchy stuff as high octane and aromatic fuels. Machine-gun fire in this war is much more deadly than it was twenty-five years ago, too.

Merrill's work earned him a citation of merit, bestowed by President Roosevelt.

How is it, then, that Allied planes today can come through savage aerial combat shot up like Swiss cheese, and their flyers live to tell it?

Improved armor is one answer, of course, but it isn't the chief one. Even more important is the gasoline tank that heals its own wounds—the self-sealing fuel cell. It isn't armor plate that keeps the heart of the plane from bursting. It's rubber!

The way they test these tanks is enough to make your eyes pop. A man sits behind a heavy-caliber machine gun. A few yards away is a tank built up with layer after layer of natural and synthetic rubber. The machine gunner lets go and fires burst after burst. The bullets go in one side of the tank and come out the other. An ordinary metal tank would be full of jagged holes, but this one self-closes on the punctures, and so swiftly does it seal them that there is only a slight loss of gas. It is almost impossible to ignite the highly inflammable contents.

The rubber industry itself considers the bullet-sealing fuel cell probably its greatest single contribution to the war. It has already saved thousands of American lives and millions of dollars' worth of planes. The thousands of American lives are enough to justify the rubber industry's claim in the eyes of fathers and mothers, sweethearts and wives.

AND who gets the credit? That's just it. It isn't one of those things you can pin like a medal on an Edison, a Fulton, or a Marconi. The bullet-seal cell adopted by the Army and Navy for fighters and bombers—it's also used in tanks—is an all-American development. You'd have to thank countless researchists and chemists, men whose names you probably wouldn't recognize—men like Jim Merrill, for example.

James A. Merrill is a research chemist at the Akron, Ohio, plants of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company. He was born in Akron, attended the local schools, was

(*Continued on page 52*)

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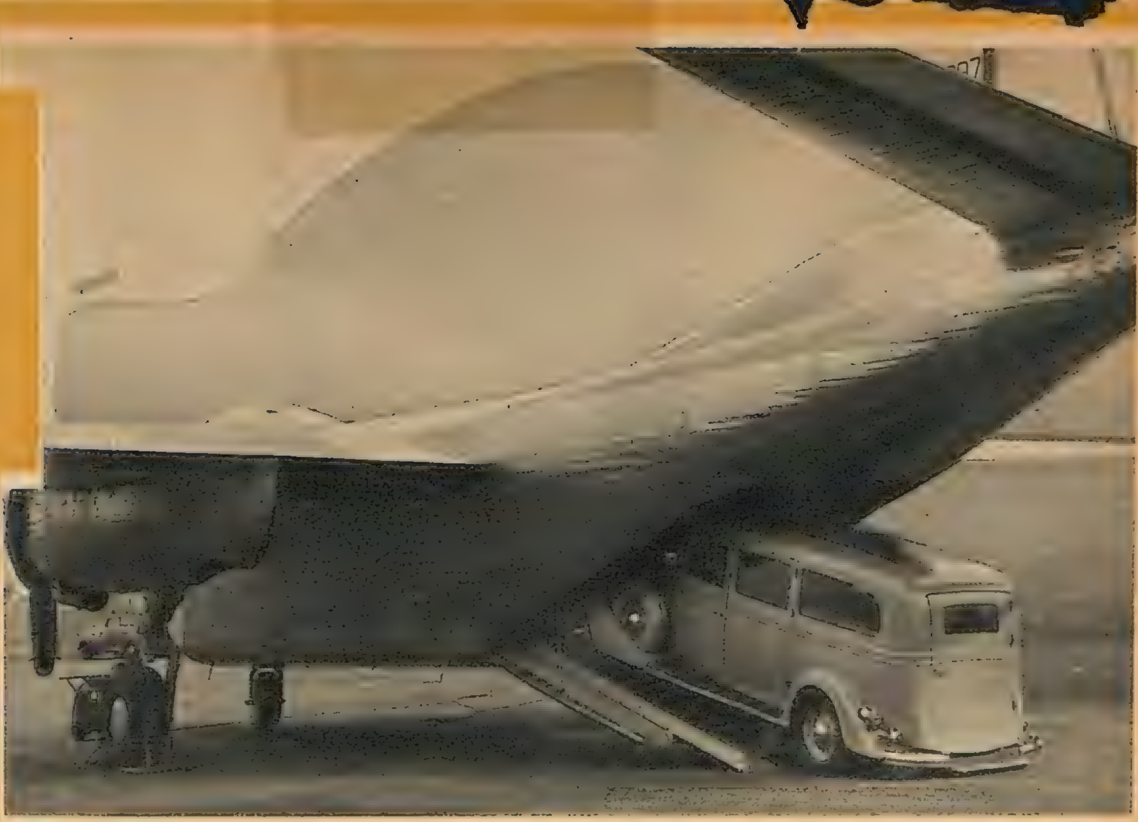
PM *for* Pleasant Moments

TILLERS PRODUCTS CORPORATION, NEW YORK. 86.8 PROOF. A BLEND OF STRAIGHT WHISKIE

ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH



The Conestoga, constructed almost entirely of stainless steel, has a cargo compartment that is 25 feet long, 8 feet high, and 8 feet wide.

Diesel Engine

Aviation interests are watching closely the progress of the Guiberson Corporation of Dallas, Texas, in developing a Diesel engine for private and commercial airplanes. Back in 1926, Fred Thaheld, who built the first low-wing monoplane in this country, began tinkering around with the Diesel idea in a little hangar in California. The Guiberson company had long been building Diesels and oil equipment. One day Allen Guiberson met Fred Thaheld. Ideas clicked.

Since 1940 a Diesel A-1020 engine, which consumes a fuel much less expensive than the high-octane gas used in conventional airplane engines, has been undergoing extensive cross-country tests. Test Pilot Austin Goodwin has flown a Stinson Reliant more than 1,000 hours, which is a lot of mileage as airplanes fly. Today Guiberson is confident that his company has a product that will appeal to the private and commercial plane owner.

One advantage is cheaper fuel. There is no carburetor to ice. There's only one engine control, and that's the throttle, for it serves as a switch, mixture control, carburetor temperature control, manifold pressure control, and everything else. No warming up is necessary in starting. No ignition noise crackles into the radio reception. And the Diesel is said to have excellent climbing power.

If you are interested in the technical side of this new engine, here it is: The A-1020 is a radial, air-cooled, compression-ignition, unsupercharged engine with direct drive. There are 9 cylinders, each with a bore of 5.125 inches, a 5½-inch stroke, and a compression ratio of 14 to 1. Total piston displacement is 1,021 inches. At sea level it's rated at 310 horsepower for take-off at 2,150 revolutions per minute. Maximum fuel consumption is .37 pound per horsepower an hour—astonishingly low. It uses .021 pound of oil per horsepower per hour. Dry weight is 653 pounds.

The I. T. C. C. Record

It's a pleasure to pay tribute to the youngest of the Army Air Forces' major branches on its recent second anniversary. It's the I Troop Carrier Command, headquarters of which are at Stout Field, Indianapolis.

Organized to transport parachute, glider, and other air landing troops and equipment, and evacuation of the wounded, this young command has established a mighty impressive record. Its planes and pilots have participated in every major war theater of the world.

It started out two years ago with about fifty Douglas DC-3 transports and a handful of trained flyers, most of them former air-line pilots. Today the command is bigger than the whole Army Air Forces of three years ago. It has thousands of pilots and planes and a vast organization of supporting personnel.

At last report, more than 200,000 casualties had been flown by I. T. C. C. In May, 1943, as part of a maneuver, the command transported 6,000 officers and men from a sandy loam, 3,500-foot square auxiliary airfield in twelve hours. Three hundred aircraft loads were flown, which means that a take-off was made approximately each two and one third minutes, including loading time.

The command flies within the combat zones, within the field of battle, behind enemy lines, under the most hazardous weather and combat conditions. It is a tactical combat organization. Commanding the organization is Brigadier General Frederick W. Evans. It has eight bases in addition to Stout Field.

The All-Steel Cargo Plane

Early in the war, when it appeared that aluminum might become too precious to use in building transport and cargo planes, the engineers turned to other metals and alloys. Stainless steel was selected for a new cargo plane of unusual design, and recently the first large stainless-steel cargo plane ever built came off the assembly lines of the Edward G. Budd Company of Philadelphia. It has been accepted by the Navy after trial board tests, and turned over to the Naval Air Transport Service.

Designated the RB1 flight ship, it is called the Conestoga. It's a high-wing monoplane, 68 feet long, with 100-foot wingspread, and is powered by two Pratt & Whitney engines with a take-off power of 1,200 horsepower each. Except for plywood floors and door, the plane is constructed entirely of stainless steel, the steel skin thickness varying from .008 of an inch upward and joined together by spot welding.

One of the first airplanes to be designed specifically for carrying freight, the cargo compartment is 25 feet long, 8 feet high and 8 feet wide. A cargo hatch opens at the rear below the upswept tail. The hatch drops down to form a ramp over which the cargo may be loaded. Cargo capacity is 10,400 pounds. As a personnel transport it may be fitted with 24 seats. Cruising speed is 165 miles per hour and flight range with maximum load and economical cruising speed is 600 miles. Originally designed for cargo work in Latin America, the Conestoga is going on immediate duty, transporting vital cargo to the fleet.

Nonconvertible Combat Planes

One postwar gift you can forget about is a combat airplane. It has been suggested that the Army and Navy should auction off (or give away) surplus combat airplanes so that returning pilots will have something to fly about in. There is only one valid point in this suggestion: returning pilots accustomed to flying fast pursuits won't be happy with 100-mile-an-hour puddle jumpers. They'll want fast planes.

But suppose the Army and Navy sold such planes at a mere 10 per cent of their cost. Even the least expensive pursuits run into such sums as $40,000 each. Ten per cent would be $4,000. But that's only a start. A 1,000-horsepower engine drinks up gasoline at a neat 100 gallons an hour. Maintenance expense would be terrific for the average person.

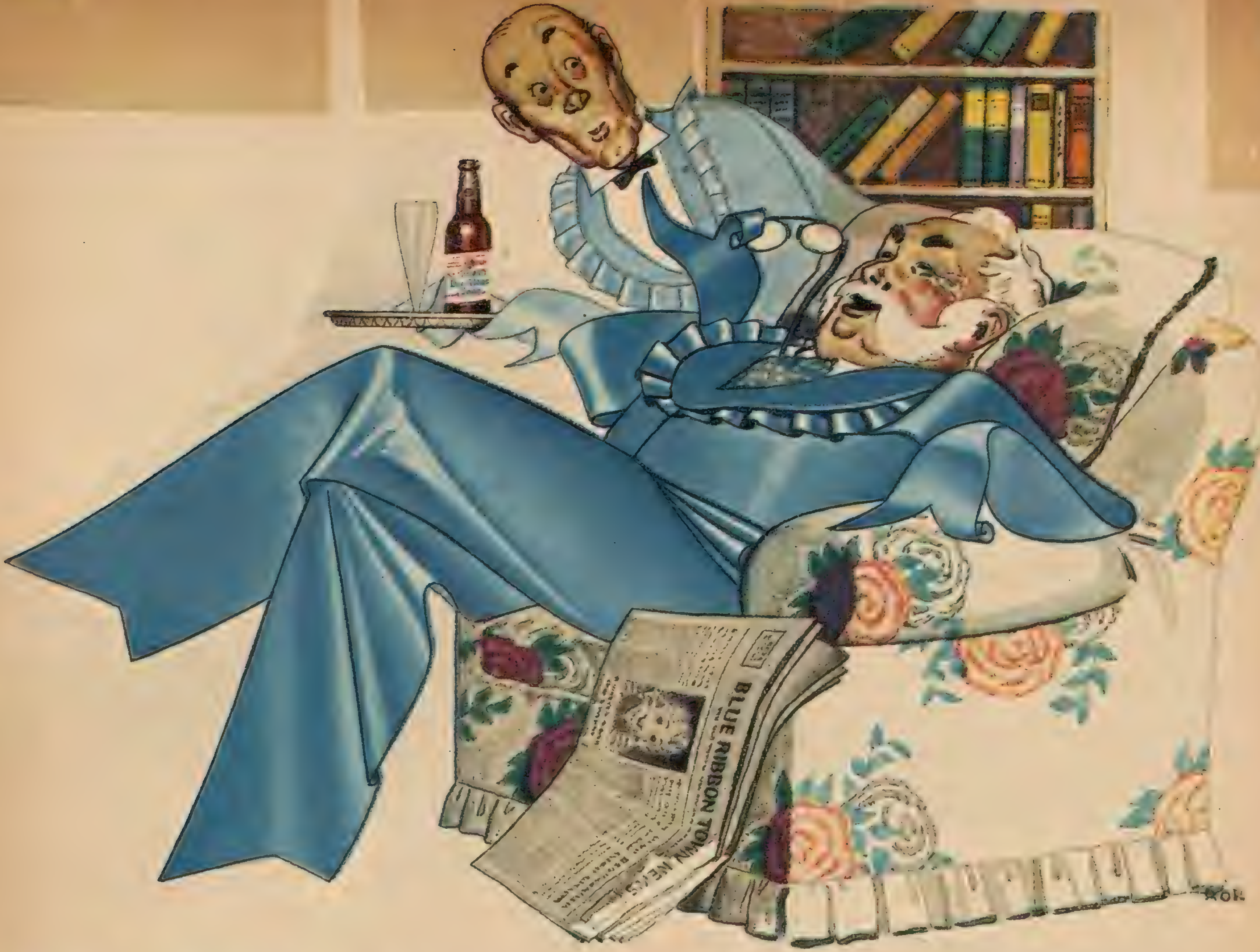
So there isn't likely to be any mass disposal of military airplanes. They can't be used or converted commercially. They have only one purpose: military.

Not Superman, Either

When you see a plane in the sky, the chances are ten to one it's a fledgling cadet in a training plane and not an air liner.

Aeronautical Training Society, liaison agency for sixty-four Army contract flying schools, made public a study recently showing that cadets from such schools are flying roundly ten times as many plane miles a month as all air lines operating in the United States. In November, 1943, according to CAB records, the eighteen domestic air lines flew 9,436,663 miles. Compared to this, cadets in A. T. S. schools flew 94,500,000 miles.

This training is given by civilian-operated schools teaching Army air courses under A. A. F. supervision. As a matter of fact, this sum is only a part of total cadet mileage flown. While A. T. S. schools do all primary flight training for the Army Air Forces and part of its basic training, the Army's own schools do most of the basic, plus all of the advanced training.



"Egad and gadzooks!" cried the butler, "It looks
Like someone's made off, sir, with some of your books"

"Tut, tut," said the Squire, "Set your poor mind at ease—
I sent them myself to the boys overseas!
You see there's a Book Drive in Blue Ribbon Town
And you'd hardly expect me to let the boys down.

"My books were the joy of my life and my treasure—
I certainly hope that they give the boys pleasure,
And as for myself—well, I'll chat with my friends
Over pleasant Blue Ribbon, that noblest of blends!"

* * *

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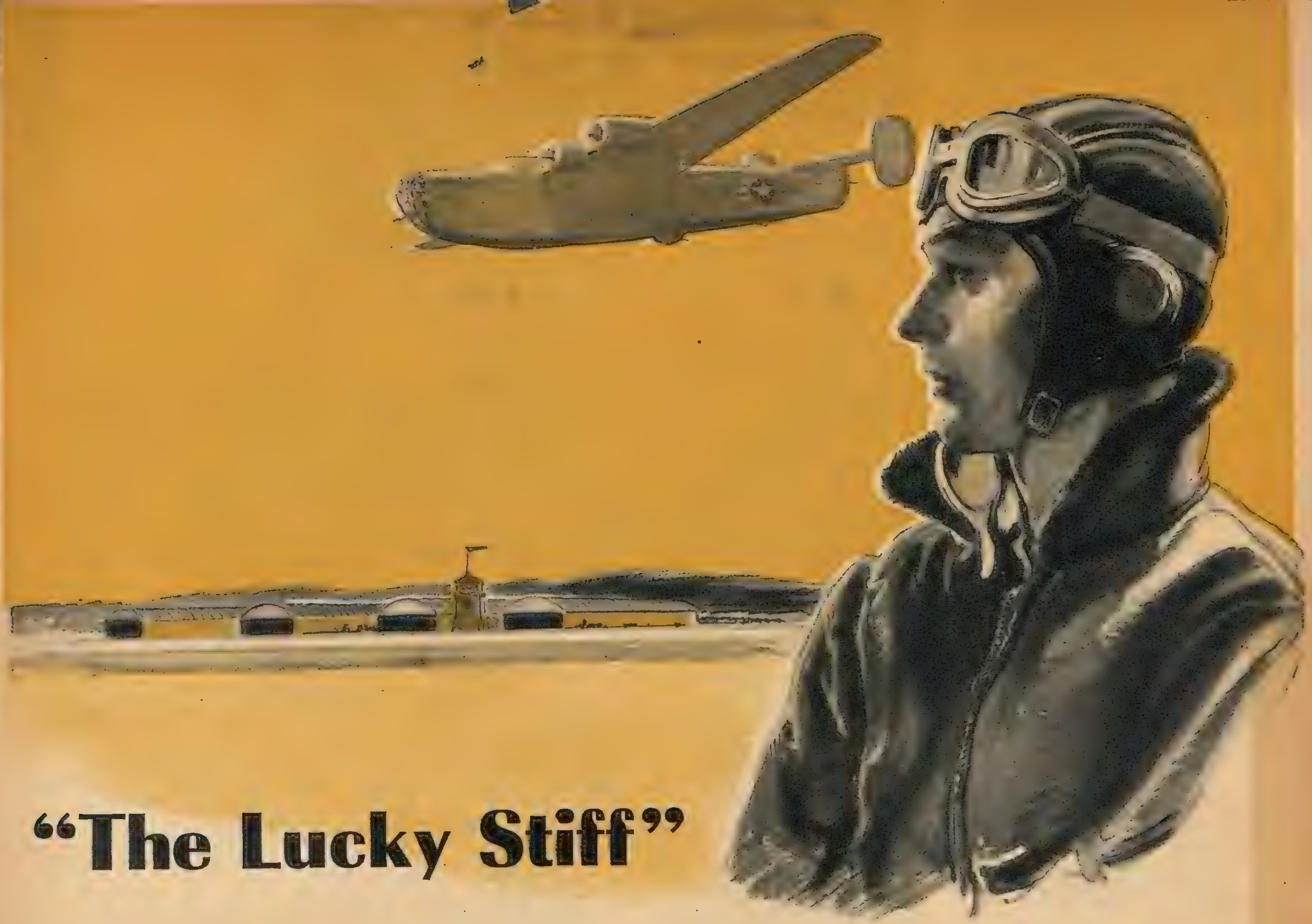
"BLUE RIBBON TOWN" IS ON THE AIR! STARRING GROUCHO MARX . . . FAMOUS STARS . . . COAST-TO-COAST CBS NETWORK . . . EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT



"The Lucky Stiff"

You see him . . . but you don't understand him . . . He's wings, bars, uniform, youth, high adventure, glamour to the girls, comic strip hero to the kids. His mother's friends say it's *so nice* that he got a commission! . . . At home on leave he gags about his job, just good clean fun. His family finds him a little aloof, less talkative . . . Sometimes he shows up a year later with a ridiculous rank for his age, a double row of ribbons, tired eyes, marked reticence . . . And some people say enviously, "The lucky stiff" . . . Listen—

LEARNING TO FLY the Army way isn't lollipops . . . Each day he dies a little until he learns to put down his natural fear, forces instinct, intellect, nerves to take on hard new habits . . . anticipates every possible accident, conditions himself to danger . . . He grows in grace, confidence, and judgment of distance from the ground. "Precision" begins to be more than a word . . . He breakfasts with a bunkmate who is on his way home by night —in a casket . . . A few short months and some mighty long moments make him a pilot, more afraid of failure than death . . . Put this down in your book: Wings never come cheap!

In the cockpit, he meets Responsibility . . . charged with a quarter-million dollar plane, nine lives besides his own, kid gunners who expect him to be God at times, a hundred items to check before a take-off; maps, air photographs, flight plans, instructions to get right, and remember . . .

EVENTUALLY he finds himself garbed and goggled and masked like some monster, slow oozing oxygen . . . unnaturally alert, always apprehensive, incredibly lonely . . . up in an eerie world where unearthly light tries his eyes, thin air threatens blue death in minutes, ravenous cold gnaws at his gloved fingers, fantasy tricks his senses . . . Evil black blossoms of flak buffet the sky. Fighters close in out of nowhere streaming destruction. A bomber ahead vanishes suddenly in a golden burst. Another sidles down in a smoke trail, spawning specks of parachutes . . . The target far below is vague and gauzy, hard to certify. The twenty second bombing run seems a lifetime . . .

Sometimes the return trip is just a long toboggan ride; sometimes a long nightmare nagged by fighters, an anxious inching back with the shot-up ship hard to handle, some dead props and dying men, a landing that leaves him limp. Missions end with missing ships, missing men, sleep that comes harder . . . yet he carries on with the cruelest, lousiest job on earth.

FOR WHAT? Flying pay, rank and ribbons don't mean much if you're dead tomorrow. But these men know they have found a job bigger than they are . . . the extermination of maniacs who menace the whole hope and future of all mankind . . . the stoppage of war at its source to save lives, dirty work, matériel and time for the ground forces, speed the finish fight . . . Do you begrudge a bomber crew anything that will make their job easier, more effective?

Be a patriot—buy another War Bond! Sounds pretty shoddy, doesn't it? . . . For how much of anybody's money will you match *your* life? Can any amount of Bond sales square one day's losses of bomber crews? Lending money may hurt—but can't kill! Your pledge of a billion would still be small change stacked up with these boys who sign on the dotted line with Death every mission! . . . Any way you figure it, those of us who stay at home, know where we'll be tomorrow—and not the boys in the bombers —are the only "lucky stiffs" in this war. And let's not hold our luck cheap!

This advertisement for the Fifth War Loan is sponsored by Jacobs Aircraft Engine Co., Pottstown, Pa. . . . largest manufacturer of aircraft engines in the medium power class.

Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF
A FREE PEOPLE

These are the men who plot the war's strategy. The combined American and British chiefs of staff meet in Washington.

ROOSEVELT'S PLACE IN WAR STRATEGY

BY MICHAEL DEGNAN

"TALK about fighting!" said the general. "This country could be spared a lot of time, grief, money, and confusion if the politicians would leave the fighting of the war out of fighting for election."

Bring up the subject of November's balloting with almost any of the professional fighting men who issue the orders in Washington that are translated into tons of metal poured on Germans and Japs across two oceans, and you get the same answer: There is no politics in this war, although the Democrats and the Republicans both want the voters to believe the contrary—and for contrary reasons.

The Democrats are claiming that President Roosevelt has all but won the war. The Republicans assert that if they had been in power our armed forces would be twice as far at half the cost.

Much as President Roosevelt has liked to refer to himself as Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, the actual commanding is done by General George C. Marshall and Admiral Ernest J. King. The President could indeed boast that he has appointed the most sagacious general and the most sagacious admiral to run the Army and the Navy as each saw fit. The men with the stars and the eagles on their shoulders and the men with the gold cuffs are pretty much in agreement on that. They are also close to unanimity in believing that the forthcoming election ought to be debated wholly on the domestic issues. Some of them think there are plenty of domestic issues that are not getting the attention they—and the voters—deserve.

What with restricting regulations, military policy, and the proprieties, no one in the Army or the Navy worth quoting will talk politics for the record. You gather, however, that every one of them with access to a ballot box is going to vote in November—but he will vote *on the domestic issues.*

How much, actually, does F. D. R. have to do with the way the war is fought? The straight-from-the-shoulder answer is given in this article

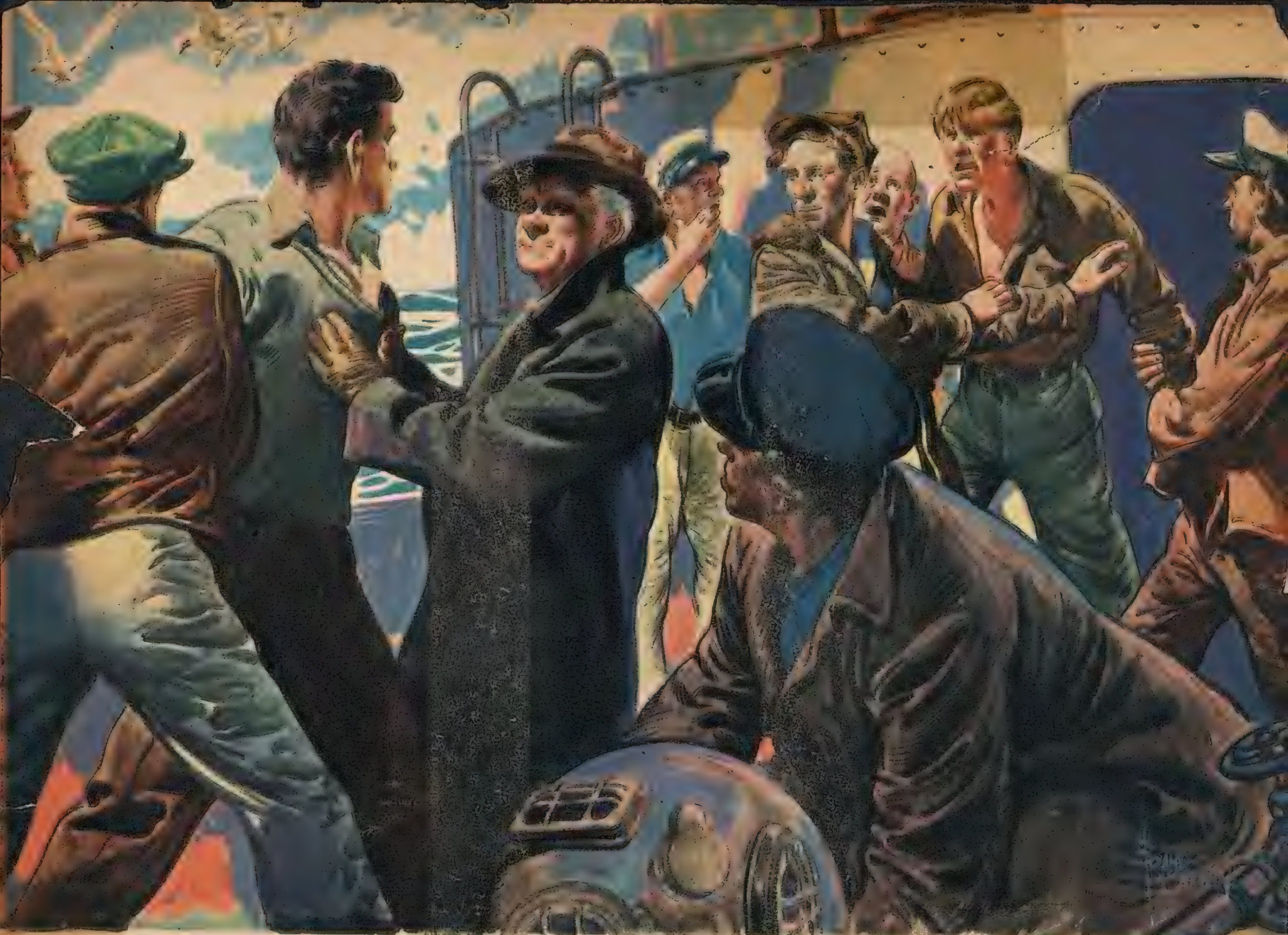
On his own assertion of military leadership, the President has made himself vulnerable to the bitter, but spurious, accusation that he has been "starving" General MacArthur's forces; that just for political reasons the Commander in Chief allowed the war in the Southwest Pacific to languish. Correspondents visiting Australia and New Zealand, including that scrupulous reporter, the late Raymond Clapper, have more than intimated that MacArthur himself believed that.

And all remember, and some still believe, the accusation that the decision to send huge armies against Hitler while employing island-hopping tactics against Tojo was a bill of goods sold to Roosevelt by Winston Churchill.

Because the strategy itself has proved successful, the New Dealers insist that all credit is due to F. D. R. for "fighting a smart war," and the party generally seeks to bask in the reflection of that credit. The claim is spurious. The whole broad plan of the global campaign was laid out by the high commands of the Army and the Navy *in Washington.* There were and are, of course, consultations with the British and the representatives of the lesser United Nations, but in all the essentials and most details the Army and the Navy are fighting the kind of war their top men want. So say those who ought to know.

And "top men" does not mean the Secretaries of War and the Navy. These officials have nothing to do with the strategy or tactics employed against Hitler or Tojo. They are civilian administrators of the vast industry of war. Campaigns, the composition of task forces, the distribution of armies and fleets are not, and should not, be decided by them. It would be a nul-

(*Continued on page 72*)



Lou bounced back, bellowing like a bull. But Hennery and Reynolds and half the crew were in between them.

NO IMAGINATION

BY H. VERNOR DIXON

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GODWIN

JOE swung his feet out of bed at the first soft chimes of the alarm clock. It was 6 A. M. and still dark in the bedroom, though he could see the rounded curve of the bay window against the lighter darkness outside. He turned off the alarm clock, yawned, stretched his huge arms, and scratched his fingers through kinky black hair.

Ruth awakened when he got to his feet, and asked sleepily, "What time is it?"

"Six."

"Sometimes," she complained, "I wish you worked in a bank, or something, so you wouldn't have to get up till a respectable hour."

Joe grinned. "Plenty of respectable people get up at six. Anyway, a guy who gets up before dawn to go to work is honest. You know he's really working for a living, or he wouldn't be up then."

Ruth sighed. "You and your dumb ideas."

Joe chuckled but made no reply. He felt good. He always felt good in the mornings. There was something about the early morning air, the silence and slow awakening of San Francisco and the rumble of trucks on the empty downtown streets that all combined to make Joe feel good. He liked the silence of the house, too. When you boarded with your own family you ceased to have a life of your own. Except early in the mornings, when no one else was up.

Joe pulled on his underwear, corduroy trousers, heavy wool socks, and thick-soled shoes. He threw a towel over a bare shoulder and tiptoed across the narrow hall to the bathroom. Shaving was a rite with him. He enjoyed it, in spite of a thick black stubble every morning that was so tough that a new razor blade was ruined on each shave. But he especially enjoyed the sweet-smelling masculine lotions on his face—not like Ruth's perfumes, but just as satisfactory to his nostrils.

He went back into the bedroom and shrugged his way into a shirt and sweater. He was used to dressing in the dark, as the light bothered Ruth. Joe was very careful not to bother Ruth in the mornings. Her disposition was pretty bad, at least until she had breakfast.

But Ruth, this morning, was still awake and sitting up in bed. She said, "Joe—"

"Yeah?"

"About that foreman's job—"

He turned to face her dim form and his smile faded. "Look," he said patiently. "I've told you a hundred times it isn't a foreman's job. It's diving master. Any diver in the whole salvage crew gets three times the pay of a foreman. A foreman is just a guy who runs the warehouse gang. But a diving master now, that's something. He bosses the divers and has charge of everything that goes on about diving. Some outfits call 'em salvage engineers. A diving master is a big shot, let me tell you."

Men who brave the sea bottom in diving suits rub shoulders constantly with death. It takes hardy men—not cocky ones—to come through

Ruth said wearily, "I know. I know. But it all sounds alike to me. Anyway, it's the job that counts. And what I want to know is, are you going to get it?"

Joe slipped on an oiled leather jacket and pulled an old battered hat over his eyes. He replied softly, "I don't know, hon'. I wish I did. The diving master we had, old Larsen, has been dead for a week now. We need a new man. I don't know why the company's stalling."

Ruth cried, "You deserve the job and you know it! The company knows it, too. You're the best diver on the Pacific Coast. And we need the extra money."

"Well, gee—I'm kind of a dumb cluck, hon'. I'm not so sure about it. I'll swap knowledge and experience with any diver in the world, but when it comes to bossing a gang and running the works, well, I don't know—"

Joe opened the bedroom door to forestall an argument, but Ruth called, "You'd better come home with that foreman's job."

"My Lord, Ruth, it's diving master."

He closed the door and stood in the hallway a moment. The feminine scent and the perfume of the bedroom, Ruth's perfume, were still in his nostrils. It always struck him as being funny, going from a room like that to a job in the muck and mud at the bottom of San Francisco Bay. Slowly he made his way down the stairs to the front door and out to the street, thinking about it. He started to grin, shoved his hands in his pockets, and hurried toward the streetcar line, whistling the only tune he knew, Sweet Adeline.

On the streetcar, standing up front near the motorman, Joe stared off into space and thought of his job. He had been working for the one company, Hennery's Marine Construction & Salvage, since he was seventeen years old. Now he was thirty-two. At first he had been a mechanic's helper, then a mechanic, in the company's big machine shop. His knowledge and use of tools had amounted to absolute genius. He loved tools and he understood how to get the best out of them. At twenty-two he had been made foreman of the machine shop.

HE got into the diving end of the game by a freak bit of luck. A gang of divers had been working on a caisson job at the lower end of the bay. They were all excellent divers, but none of them had the mechanical skill required on that particular job. The work on the caisson was badly butched and it looked like the company was going to take a heavy loss. Until the diving master suggested training Joe in underwater work and sending him down. In three days Joe picked up sufficient diving knowledge to tackle the caisson. He completed the job, to everyone's satisfaction and relief, and returned to his machine shop.

A few months later a similar job came up, and before Joe was fully aware of how it had come about, he was a full-fledged diver. He had remained a diver ever since and, with his genius for mechanics, had become one of the greatest in the business. He liked the job, he liked the men he worked with, and he liked the company. The job of diving master should rightfully be his.

But it would probably go to Louis Gardner, a new man in the company. C. L. Hennery, the big boss, had sent Gardner out from the East Coast for a specialized job at the Navy's Mare Island. Gardner was a good diver, though he did little diving himself. He had already been salvage engineer on two or three Eastern jobs. He had the necessary experience and background.

Joe's shoulders drooped and he no longer felt good. If Gardner were made diving master, Joe would have to leave the company, even after his fifteen years of work. Gardner was the cocky, aggressive, self-assertive type; he could never understand Joe's amiable and easygoing disposition. Already he was beginning to push Joe, riding him, seeing how far he could go. And as his boss, Lou would be even worse. But there was a limit to how far Joe could be pushed and that limit was almost reached.

Joe raised his powerful hands and looked at them, hands capable of bending and twisting two-inch steel tubing. He dropped his hands and stared sightlessly at the dawn rising over the city. No, he thought; I'd have to quit. I wouldn't like to kill a guy just because I disliked him. Not much sense to that.

THE Hennery warehouse was a long pier on San Francisco's Embarcadero. The administrative offices were at the street end of the pier, but the office of Howie Reynolds, chief engineer and company manager, was at the far end of the pier overlooking the bay. Howie was seated in a swivel chair at the side of his battered desk. A wiry little man, with a bald head, shrewd blue eyes, and a thin worried mouth, Howie, at the moment, seemed even more burdened with the cares of life than usual.

C. L. Hennery, who had just flown in from Washington, was seated across from him. Hennery was a stocky individual with pure white hair, laughing eyes, and a mouth curved for a smile. Hennery did the smiling and the lobbying and got the contracts. Howie Reynolds did the worrying and fulfilled the contracts. The arrangement worked well for both of them. But now, through the loss of the diving master in an underwater accident, the machinery of the company was at a standstill.

Hennery clipped the end from a cigar, lit it, and blew out a succession of smoke rings. He watched them float away and dissipate, then said, "Howie, I'm afraid you're procrastinating."

Howie growled, "Maybe I am. Maybe you're right. But I just can't make up my mind. This Lou Gardner you sent out is a good man, no doubt of that."

"He has done some fine work in the East."

"Sure. I know. He did good work for us on the Mare Island job, too. He would probably make a good diving master. But Joe Monahan should make a better one."

Hennery smiled. "Why do you say should?"

Howie threw his hands up in the air. "That's just it. I'm not sure. Joe is tops as a diver, and no mechanic in the world can even begin to touch him. When you combine the two you got a world-beater. That's Joe. Furthermore, he's a big likable guy and everybody's crazy about him. Any diver in the country would be willing and glad to work under Joe. But," he said, with considerable exasperation, "he lacks imagination. That's what worries me about Joe."

"Why?"

"Simple enough. We're in business to make money."

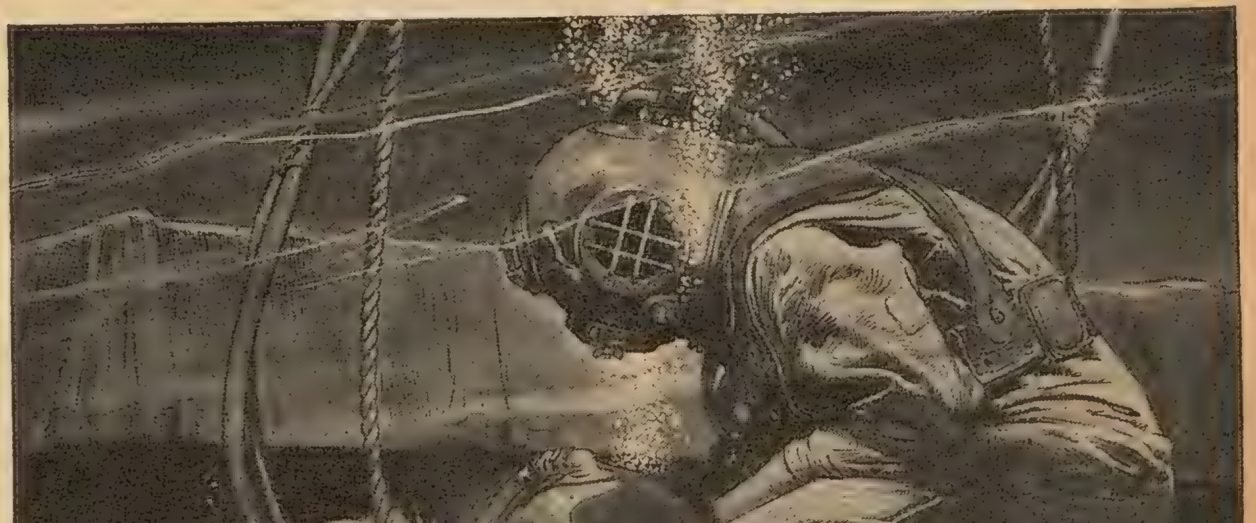
"Right now," Hennery reminded him, "we're losing it at the rate of about three thousand a day."

"All right. All right. But you can't run a big crew of divers without a diving master. But, as I was saying, we're in the business to make money. O. K. So say you have five divers working on a salvage job. Those men get paid from twenty to fifty dollars a day apiece. With their helpers and tenders and the salvage tug and the crew of the tug, the diving expense runs up to better than two thousand dollars a day. That isn't marbles. So every day cut from the total time on a salvage job means that much profit to the company; or, if added on, that much loss. Right?"

"Of course."

"O. K. That's why I'm afraid of Joe. At heart, the guy is a machinist, patient, painstaking, thorough, methodical—you know the type. Anything he does is done

(*Continued on page 65*)



Lou was spread-eagled under the cover, pinned down by the weight of three tons.

THE MAYOR of WASHINGTON

Meet The Man — Bilbo! — Boisterous Baron of Backwoods Billingsgate who now burdens the nation's capital with his bellicose bombast

BY DAVID BRINKLEY

THEODORE G. (THE MAN) BILBO, phrenologist, twice governor of Mississippi and now a United States Senator, is somewhere between five feet and five feet six inches tall. He refuses to say exactly. But one Mississippian who helped vote him into the Senate says, "When Theo Bilbo is on the stump, he's seven feet ten inches tall."

That voter has let his admiration for The Man overcome his accuracy, but his measurement gives you some idea of Bilbo's talent for stump speaking, a talent he has used freely in getting himself elected state senator, lieutenant governor, governor, and finally U. S. Senator for two terms.

Now Bilbo has cut another notch in the political shotgun he's toted through forty-five years of stormy bayou politics. He carved it when he became chairman of the Senate's District of Columbia Committee, a job carrying the unofficial title, "Mayor of Washington." Bilbo, straightening the diamond horseshoe stickpin he's worn since 1916 when he bought it at an auction for $92.50, announced, "I'm a pig for punishment." After some thought, he added that he had some ideas on how a city should be run.

Washington soon learned that Bilbo wasn't joking. In less than a month, the newspapers and church and civic organizations were crying for his scalp. The uproar started when the "mayor" of the nation's eleventh largest city made the following pronouncements:

All the 20,000 persons living in the capital's alley dwellings, 90 per cent of them Negroes, must move out by July 1, thus clearing up the city's worst slums in one grand swoop. This ill-housed, low-income group must find homes elsewhere. Those who can't must go back to the farm, wherever that may be.

Washingtonians, now barred by law from voting, should not be granted suffrage, according to Bilbo, even though they have asked for it continually since Congress took it away in 1878. "If suffrage should be granted," he said, "the Negroes would soon have control of the city and the alleys would be outvoting the avenues."

THE Washington Post immediately labeled Bilbo's new administration "An Adventure in Bigotry" and asked for his removal. The Southeast Council of Churches, calling him "anti-Christian and unpatriotic," asked for another chairman. The Negro Tribune called him "the Bilbonic plague," the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People said he was "unfit to preside," and the Washington tabloid Daily News said, "Throw him out."

Washington, not as the nation's capital but simply as another big city, is accustomed by sad experience to being governed by out-of-towners who know nothing of its local problems. The law gives it no voice in its own government. The city, not part of any state, is run by Congress, even to the smallest local affairs. An act of Congress is required to change the hours for turning on street lights or the days when shad may be sold in fish markets.

Residents have to a degree accepted their votelessness and political invalidism as a price they pay for front-row seats at the drama that is the national government. But Bilbo, they feel, is setting the price altogether too high.

Aside from his anti-Negro pronouncements, he has demanded a stiffer penal code for Washington, a city almost completely free of organized or big-scale crime, and has advocated taking back from the State of Virginia a thirty-square-mile strip of land that once was a part of the District. The land was given back to Virginia in 1846. "That," said Bilbo, reviving an issue a century dead, "was a mistake."

His anti-Negro policies have been part of his political capital for years, and he still advocates deporting this country's Negro citizens to a colony in West Africa.

When Bilbo, now sixty-six, took over the chairmanship, some of his colleagues warned him to "lay off" his pet issue, the race question. But even though he has refused to lay off, Congress is traditionally slow to move against a member.

Until now, most Washingtonians have known Bilbo best as the newly-elected senator who rolled into town in 1935 in the dusty campaign flivver he had driven over Mississippi from Yellow Rabbit to Vinegar Bend, and as the senator who in 1942 helped talk the anti-poll-tax bill to death. "It is rumored," he said during that epic filibuster, "that I might talk thirty days." Senators stayed away from the chamber in droves when he started reading from tomes of court decisions.

When he rattled into Washington, Bilbo brought with him a promise to "raise more hell than Huey Long." That promise he has not kept. There was some hope, and fear, that he and the Kingfish might meet on the floor in a battle of bayou bombast. They sniped at each other, but never really met in verbal battle. Bilbo called the Louisianan "the Crawfish" and said, "He better stay out of Mississippi." Long, who never minced a word, called The Man "just a plain damned fool."

Most Mississippi newspapers have fought Bilbo, but he has overcome them by going to the people with hundreds of speeches. His energy seems endless and he admittedly enjoys campaigning more than holding office. In one race he arose at 4 A. M., made four to eight speeches daily, and lived on a diet of sardines, cheese and crackers. At the end of that ordeal he had gained ten pounds.

To attend a Bilbo stump rally is to gather the impression of a furious, tireless human windmill. The Man trumpets endorsements of "a planned redistribution of the wealth," old-age pensions, and any other legislation to tax the rich and give jobs and cash to the poor. Then you may hear him voice his famous description of himself: "Bilbo—what a man! A man of titanic energy, dynamic driving force, a wonder in sustained power of endurance, and a marvel of intellectual brilliance! The Man—Bilbo!" Mississippians, if the vote count is any indication, have taken him at his word.

Most of his campaign speeches deal with personalities. "Down there," he says, "it's always a family fight. We're all Democrats, so we have to deal in personalities because there are no real issues. We don't try to show the other fellow favors this or that. We just try to show he's a low-down blankety-blank."

BILBO, the youngest of ten children, was born in 1877 on a farm in the wire-grass country of Mississippi, six miles from the railroad station at Poplarville. Money was not plentiful and he went to school only by paying his own expenses.

Between terms at Peabody College and Vanderbilt University, where he won a law degree, he sandwiched work as a news butcher on Southern trains. While selling bananas and newspapers up and down lurching train aisles, he learned phrenology, a system by which some say they can determine character from head shapes. "During those days," he says, "I earned as much as $250 a month." He claims he could look at a passenger's head and determine the quickest and best way to separate him from his money.

After college, Bilbo became a traveling Sunday-school organizer and won a preacher's license as a reward for secretarial services at Baptist institutions. Those who heard him say he could preach a thumping sermon on the regular minister's day off. Those who have heard his speeches in later years don't doubt it.

He first ran for office, county court clerk, at twenty-two and lost by ninety-six votes. At thirty he was back again seeking a $250-a-year job as state senator. He tore into that campaign furiously, rode his father's horse 2,000 miles, and took his message to the people. They liked it and elected him by a big majority.

The story of Bilbo and that first term in the legislature has been told many times, and there have been almost as many versions as tellers. It involves a charge of bribery, impeachment proceedings, and a resolution calling him "unfit to sit with honest, upright men in a respectable legislative body." He was saved from impeachment by one vote.

Bilbo took the stump again four years later and won election as lieutenant governor. His first official act was to remove the "unfit" resolution from the records.

The next four years were uneventful, except for another bribery charge and an-

PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

Senator Bilbo loads up with ammunition for a filibuster. He says he can talk for thirty days if need be.

other acquittal. Bilbo then told the voters he wanted to be governor. They obliged him, adding proof of The Man's political indestructibility. A defeated opponent once said: "The lower you push Theo Bilbo, the higher he bounces back."

As governor, in one uproarious day, Bilbo fired the presidents of the University of Mississippi, the State College for Women, and the A. and M. College. On the same day he fired 179 professors and teachers. For chancellor of the university system he named a real-estate salesman who held no degree. The Mississippi Power and Light Company's advertising manager was made president of the A. and M. College. For a University Administration Board, he chose two dentists, one bank cashier, one doctor, and three lawyers.

When Bilbo was criticized for tampering with the schools, his only answer was: "Things have come to a hell of a pass when a man can't wallop his own jackass."

These were the days when his flair for showmanship began to carry over into his wardrobe. He stocked up on red neckties, red pajamas, red suspenders, and red handkerchiefs. The final bit of dash was the diamond stickpin. He regards the pin as a talisman of good fortune, and even though he once lost a $75,000 pecan farm because he couldn't raise $500 to settle a claim, the stickpin has never seen the inside of a pawnshop.

Governor Bilbo made one mistake he was to regret later. He developed a hatred for the South African tick, a tiny insect he credited with spreading Texas fever, a disease deadly to cattle. He pushed legislation requiring farmers to dip their cattle into chemical vats to kill any ticks they might be carrying. Farmers didn't like the idea. They feared the dip would kill their cattle along with the ticks. But Bilbo persisted, even after someone sneaked into the state's dipping yards and dynamited the vats.

Governor Lee M. Russell, who succeeded Bilbo, hadn't been in the State House long when he became involved in a suit. The complainant summoned Bilbo as the main witness, but Bilbo avoided testifying against his friend Russell by hiding in a barn and the case was voided for lack of evidence. However, Judge Edwin R. Holmes gave Bilbo thirty days in jail for contempt. His sentence was suspended after he had spent ten days in jail, but even those days weren't wasted. His cell faced a street, and by shouting through the barred window he gathered a crowd outside. He detailed the injustice of his case and announced he would seek a second term as governor at the next election.

He did, but the farmers remembered those livestock dipping vats and were still resentful. So he lost—to the South African tick.

In 1928 his luck was better and he was elected governor again. This term was an unhappy one both for Bilbo and the people of Mississippi. His enemies controlled the legislature. He refused to sign its tax bills and it refused to pass his. When his term ended, the state's treasury balance stood at $1,326.17, and appropriated obligations were $7,486,760.20. The Man, along with the State of Mississippi, was broke.

Hubert D. Stephens, then representing Mississippi in the U. S. Senate, fell ill during Bilbo's last term. Hearing Bilbo was interested, he charged him with "waiting like a ghoul for me to die" so he could appoint a successor.

"Senator Stephens," Bilbo retorted, "is a vicious, malicious, pusillanimous, cold-blooded, premeditated, plain, ordinary liar." Later he added, "I was really very considerate of him. He was a sick man."

WHEN he left the governorship, Bilbo campaigned for U. S. Senator Pat Harrison, then up for re-election in Mississippi. Harrison won. He rewarded The Man with a $6,000-a-year Department of Agriculture job as a "consultant on public relations." What Bilbo really did was supervise a corps of women who clipped mentions of the Department's AAA program from newspapers and magazines. He denies that he ever dipped a brush into a paste pot, and he resented the name applied to him both in Mississippi and Washington—"The Pastemaster General."

For a year he fussed with the AAA's scrapbooks and managed to see that his name appeared in his clippings occasionally, and that it was always properly spelled B-I-L-B-O.

Senator Stephens thought he had The Man safe from the temptation to run for office. He was wrong. Bilbo was born to run for office. He appeared suddenly in Senator Harrison's office and announced that he planned to oppose Stephens in the next race.

Harrison told him to go ahead, but added, "I'll have to support Stephens."

"By all means do so," Bilbo said. "That'll give me my best campaign argument."

"What's that?"

"I'm going to say you now have two Senate seats in your pocket, but the Constitution calls for two men and I'm running for the vacancy."

Bilbo ran, and he put on the loudest, gaudiest campaign Mississippi had ever seen. He toured the state from end to end in his flivver. He threw barbecue parties for more than 18,000 persons. He spoke at least twice a day. He sang Bringing in the Sheaves, The Ninety and Nine, and Clementine, accompanying himself on the melodeon. He promised voters everything desirable. He blasted at such fanciful enemies as "farmer murderers, corruptors of Southern womanhood, and skunks who steal Gideon Bibles from hotel rooms." He

(*Continued on page 57*)

The WINDS of HEAVEN

Liberty's
SHORT SHORT
STORY

BY LILLIAN DAY

ILLUSTRATED BY O. F. SCHMIDT

> . . . so loving to my mother,
> That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
> Visit her face too roughly.
> —Hamlet.

Monday

MUM is in love again, and this time it looks serious. Roger and I are pretty broad-minded, but we object to her meeting a man on street corners. She's usually pretty frank, and it hurts us that she hasn't taken us into her confidence.

Katie is worried, too. Katie has been with us since Roger was a baby and has practically brought us up, on account of Mum being a Career Woman.

Quite a number of men have been in love with Mum, but so far we haven't O. K.'d any. Last summer it was Judge Hargrove. He sent me chocolates and Roger an outfit called Fun with Chemistry which was pretty condescending, considering my brother's I. Q. Katie liked the judge because he took second helpings and the cards said he was coming into a legacy.

After we disposed of the judge, Mum began going out with an Englishman named Neville Bickford, a phony if ever there was one. But he at least had the intelligence to give me very sophisticated earrings and Roger a copy of The Golden Bough. We have decided to accept all bribes from Mum's suitors, but not to be corrupted by them.

Bickey's cards showed a dark woman and a blonde (Mum), and Katie said it wouldn't surprise her if he had a wife hidden away somewhere.

But this time we're in trouble because we haven't even met the man. All we know is, his name is Horace Winter and Mum met him through business. She has been very gay lately and has been hinting mysteriously that *if* a certain thing happens she will get Roger a bicycle and me a fur jacket. But the worst of all is, she's reading *poetry*. When love hits them in middle age it hits them hard!

Wednesday

WE are collecting evidence and things look pretty bad.

Today, after school, we had a conference and decided we must do something drastic to save poor Mum from herself. This so-called Mr. Winter is living at the Waldorf and just throwing his money around—or whosever money it is. Katie says when a man has honorable intentions there's always some female relative he wants to introduce the party to. Roger says there are men who just marry women for the insurance and murder them, like Landru, but I think he's been reading too much. We have no reason to assume this man is a murderer. I figured he just doesn't want to work, and thinks it would be pretty soft to marry a nice widow with a good salary. And I was right, but it was Katie who got the proof.

At first she didn't want to tell us how she discovered it. Roger accused her of reading Mum's mail, which is one of the few things we *don't* do. She was so hurt she almost gave notice.

I had quite a time coaxing her to tell us what had happened, although she was dying to.

"Poor lamb," she said. "He must have bewitched her that is working her fingers to the bone to turn an honest penny to bring up her offspring in decency with a roof over their head. And without any beating about the bush, he come out with it in so many words and asked her point-blank how much salary she was making."

Katie had been so horrified she had almost dropped the extension telephone.

Since we couldn't get at Winter, we decided that I was to have a serious talk with Mum; for, after all, a woman's best friend is her daughter.

Thursday

I GOT exactly nowhere. When the blow falls, Mum can't say I didn't warn her. I began by reminding her that her birthday was coming.

"Thirty-six," I said, "is a milestone in a woman's life. After that she's on the downward path toward forty."

"Dear me," said Mum. "I never looked at it that way. What would you suggest I do about it?"

"You know, Mummie, I have only your best interest at heart."

"Of course, Camilla, but I haven't a gray hair and I'm pretty active on my feet. I could have my face lifted, but I like it where it is."

"This is no time for humor," I said severely. "I want you to answer me frankly. Are you in love?"

She avoided my eyes. "I think a mother of my age is entitled to some privacy," was all she said.

"What do you know about this Mr. Winter?" I asked point-blank.

"Mr. Winter?" Mum feigned surprise. "Not very much."

"Why don't you bring him home for dinner?" I suggested. "You know Roger and I always like to meet your friends."

"Maybe I have my reasons," she said, and I couldn't get another word out of her.

Saturday

WELL, we've fixed Horace Winter. When we finally met him yesterday, our worst suspicions were confirmed. He has a small black mustache and shifty gray eyes.

He came to call for Mum, and we were supposed to be out, but we managed to be there. We had him ten minutes while Mum was dressing, and we made the most of it.

He asked Roger what he intended to be when he grew up.

"Are they still asking that one," replied Roger, "with the world falling to pieces?"

"Do you study arithmetic?"

"Differential calculus," said Roger.

"Trying to square the circle, eh?" said Winter.

"Don't you know they tried it for centuries until Lindemann proved that Pi was transcendental?"

"My word!" was all Winter could say. Then he turned to me. "And what are you studying, young lady?"

"I go to private school," I said, "and I expect to go to Vassar and then Dramatic School. I take ballet and piano and music appreciation and I'm going to study painting." I don't think it's a sin to lie in a good cause.

"I'm going to Princeton," said Roger, "and then Oxford. It costs a fortune to educate people nowadays. I don't know how Mum will manage."

"She seems to have managed very well so far." The impudence of him, right to our faces!

"The insurance is all gone," I said sadly. "The only thing for Mum to do is to marry money."

"Yes," sighed Roger. "Poor Mum is tired of working, and she isn't so young any more."

"The upper thirties isn't really old," I said, "but a woman needs a man to lean on."

"Funny," he said, "I judged your mother to be the independent type."

"That's what you think," I said, and then we heard Mum coming.

As soon as they had gone Katie read his cards, as she knew he was the jack of diamonds. She said he came to the house across a body of water, and boded no good.

Mum came home before eleven. The poor dear looked so upset we were sure they had had a quarrel. One would think he'd have the decency to jilt her gradually. She was very cross and scolded Roger for being up so late.

A pretty young widow has her hands full with two smart kids supervising her love life. But, as always, youth discovers there's a lot it doesn't know

Later I thought I heard her crying in bed. I longed to go in and comfort her, but I thought it would be better to let her fight it out alone.

Sunday

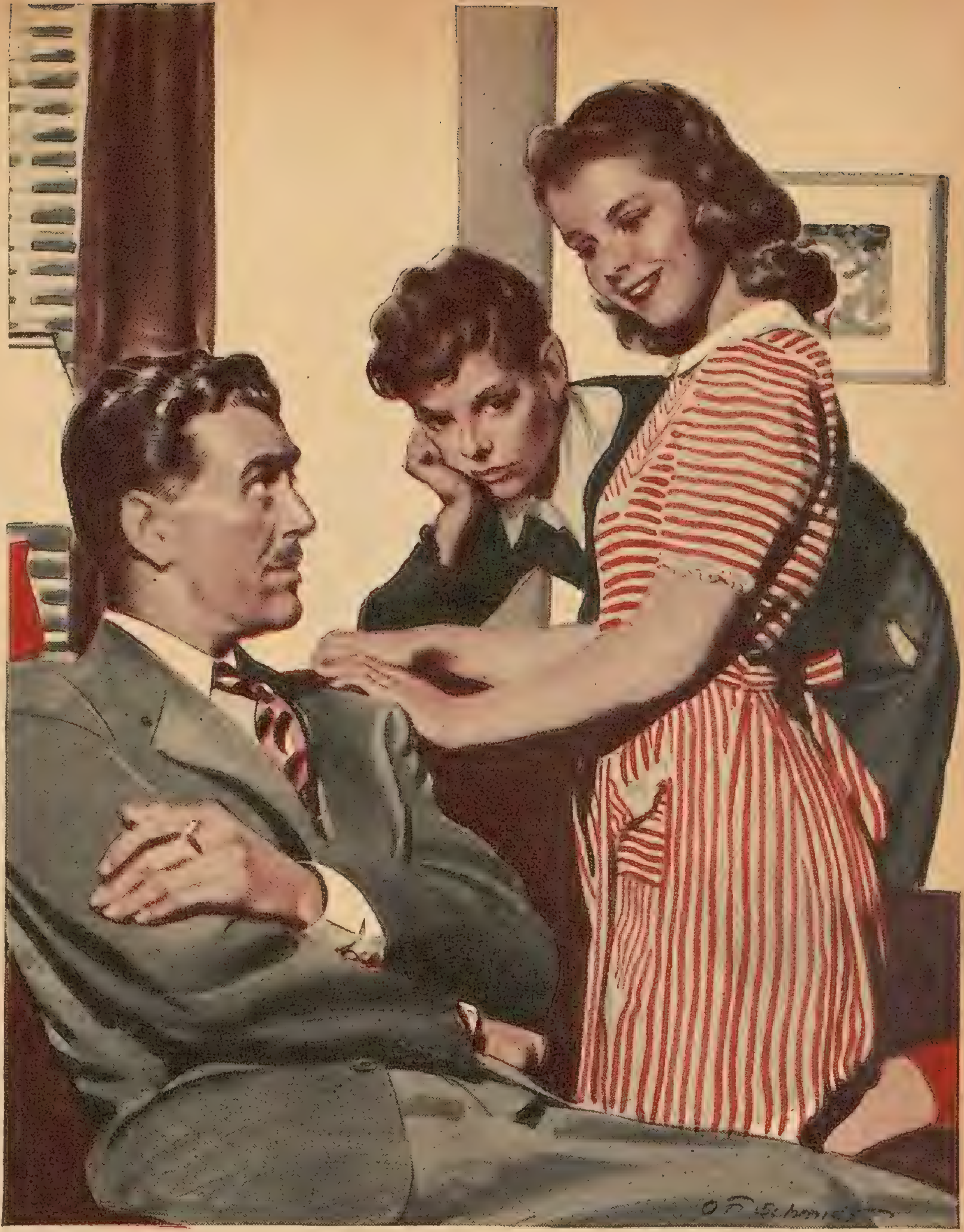
ANY one can make a mistake.

How could we have guessed that Mr. Winter was the new president of Todd & Birmingham? How were we to smell that he had come from the Chicago office to reorganize the staff, and that he was prejudiced against women executives because they went off and got married just when they became valuable? Are we clairvoyant?

Mum told us about it at breakfast this morning. "That's why I didn't bring him home for dinner," she said. "The atmosphere around here is a little too domestic."

There were tears in Roger's eyes. He's really a softie under his I. Q.

"Funny," said Mum, "I was sure it was all settled, and something must have happened, because Friday night he had changed his mind and decided to give Mr. Barker the job. So there go the bicycle and the fur jacket. I was going to give Katie a raise and refurnish the living room. It was fun while it lasted."



"The upper thirties isn't really old," I said, "but a woman needs a man to lean on."

"Now you've gone and done it for fair," said Katie.

"Is that so!" said Roger. "And how about the dark man with light eyes that bodes no good?"

"What are you talking about?" asked Mum. And then the telephone rang, and she ran to answer it like lubricated lightning.

"The cards don't lie," said Katie. "The ten of hearts can mean three things. And it seems to me that them as has such a high Q. T. and thinks a gentleman of Mr. Winter's caliber is an impostor should go back to the kindergarten."

"I think you ought to see Mr. Winter and explain everything," I suggested, "in words of one syllable."

"I think so too," sniffed Katie, "and then I can give notice."

"Don't be a goon," said Roger. "Cam and I will take the rap. Mum can't fire us."

"I've something to say—" began Katie, when Mum returned. But Roger broke in, "Did he give you a reason?"

"He said business wasn't the place for a woman of my type. He asked me to marry him."

We were all speechless, but not for long.

"There," said Katie. "The ten of hearts can also mean a proposal."

I thought of Mum's crying in bed. "Mummy darling," I said, "you're not doing it for our sakes, are you?"

"There are loads of jobs after school," said Roger.

"He's as fine a specimen as ever walked in shoe leather," said Katie, wiping her eyes, "and you deserve it, ma'am."

"Oh, I'm not marrying him," said Mum. "Whatever made you think so?"

Katie was disappointed. "You turned down the boss himself?"

"Will you get fired?" I asked.

"On the contrary. He just phoned to say I'm getting the job. He said I had a couple of smart kids that needed an expensive education. What were you going to tell me, Katie?"

"Nothing, ma'am; I've changed my mind."

"That's fine. Now we can get the fur jacket and the bicycle and refurnish the living room."

"*Moderne*," said Katie, "is very nice. It doesn't catch the dust."

THE END

THE ARMY'S GOT A NAVY, TOO

Boats in the Army? Uh-huh, our land forces have an enormous fleet, not to mention extraordinary sailors. Gangway for the soldiers' admirals

BY MORRIS MARKEY

U.S.ARMY
FLOAT

This fellow works for the Army—at a navy job. At Noumea, New Caledonia, he signals one of the corps' small boats.

EVERYBODY knows that our Navy possesses a large and very formidable army called the U. S. Marine Corps. But we have not heard a great deal about the navy which our Army operates, and it is a very large navy indeed. In fact, hull for hull and keel for keel, the Army has more surface craft than the Navy and the Coast Guard put together. Of course, this doesn't mean battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and aircraft carriers. It means, for the most part, a huge number of vessels—some of them pretty small—which operate in the rivers and lakes and harbors back home. But this navy branch of the Army also includes some highly interesting boats of a new sort. They were especially developed for the island-to-island war we are fighting in the Pacific. They are manned by an extraordinary collection of sailormen, and they are turning out to be practically indispensable as our campaign creeps into the ring of island defenses guarding Tokyo.

I had dinner aboard one of them at Pearl Harbor. I can't tell you the name of the ship, because nobody had ever bothered to name it. The only designation it could boast was a number, but it was a whole ship nevertheless.

We sat down to ham, beans, coffee and pink ice cream in as neat a miniature wardroom as you will ever see—slick and clean and comfortable. And the officers began inevitably to yarn.

They call these craft relief ships. Quite a few of them were lying in the basin where we were tied up, all getting swabbed down and refueled for the next assignment out among the islands. They come in two sizes. The F series boats are about 100 feet long and 30 feet in the beam, with shallow draft and Diesel engines for power. Each has a grand total of thirteen officers and men, and each can carry about 165 tons of cargo—or troops, or construction men, or wounded.

The H boats are bigger, about 150 feet long, with a crew of twenty-three and a cargo capacity of nearly 500 tons.

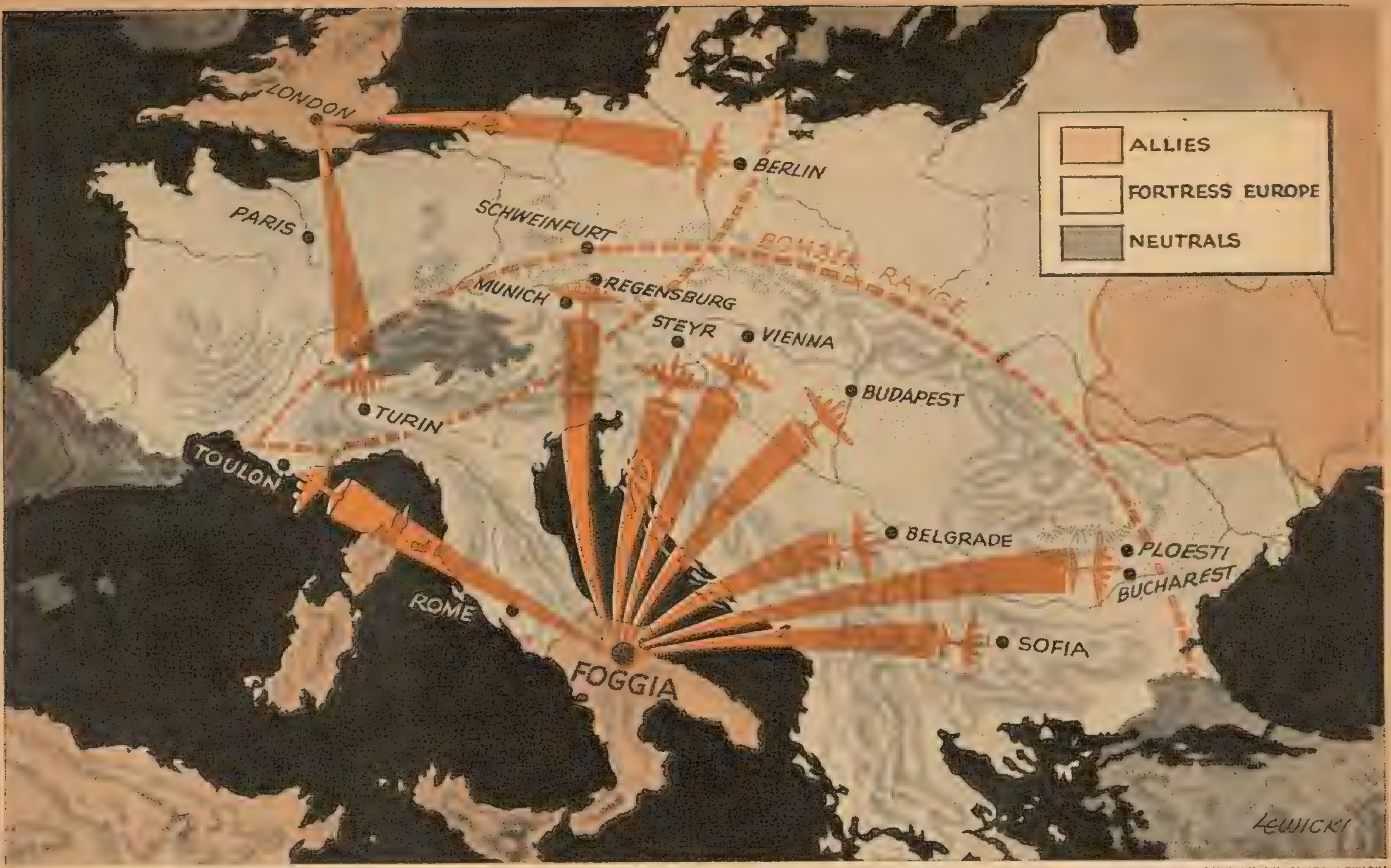
Their duties? Anything that comes along. We have taken several islands away from the Japs now, and they are stretched over hundreds and even thousands of miles of open sea, the important ones often lying within a maze of coral reefs and atolls. Every conquered island must have a garrison, and food and medical and ammunition requirements must be met on schedule. The relief boats make their runs on regular schedule to supply these places, to take off the sick and wounded, to bring in replacements.

Many of the islands have harbors or anchorages. Our own naval and air bombardments, plus the scuttling and demolition activities of the defeated Japs, often half-ruin these anchorages, cluttering them with debris and obstructing entrance channels. The relief boats tow salvage equipment, huge dredges and cranes, over great stretches of open sea to make repairs possible. They bring *(Continued on page 53)*

The Army's ocean-going navy is supply ships—ferries, actually—that maintain a regular service among the Pacific island garrisons.

TRANSPORTATION CORPS PHOTOS FROM SIGNAL CORPS

They are small craft, not much longer than 100 feet, without armor or armament. Civilian crews, over age or too young, say they are 4-F navy.



MAP DRAWN FOR LIBERTY BY JAMES LEWICKI

The roof of Hitler's Europe fell in when we occupied Italy. Our air forces there and in Britain now effectively blanket the continent.

OUR WAR IN ITALY

BY JOHN DALY

Our long stalemate in Italy made it seem for a while that the campaign there was a mistake. But it paid big dividends and is still paying them

THE early Italian sun burned away the morning mist hugging the mountains on either side of the Liri Valley. Overhead, American fighters, medium heavy bombers, converged on the entrance to the valley, seemed to pause a moment in flight, dropped their cargoes of bombs, and then turned to disappear behind the hills to the south.

It was March 15, 1944, and the American 12th and 15th Air Forces, based in Italy, were trying to blow Cassino, German-held gateway to the Liri Valley, off the map. Fourteen hundred tons of bombs left the bomb bays of the ships and the wing installations of the fighter-bombers, and tumbled lazily toward Cassino town.

A lean, quiet private from the American 36th Division, the division which had launched the first attack on Cassino on January 20, stirred restlessly in our jeep and said, "I hope it works this time. We've been sitting here so long. That seems to be about all we've done in Italy." He turned to me. "You're a correspondent," he said. "You're supposed to know what it's all about. Why did we ever come into Italy, anyway? What's it getting us, except a lot of trouble?"

Two weeks later I sat in a restaurant in New York. One of my companions was an owner of a factory turning out vital war supplies. We had been talking about the war. Out of the blue, the owner of the war factory leaned across the table and said in puzzled tones, "What did we go into Italy for? What did it get us and what is it getting us?"

The question surprised me. Coming from the private in Italy, it could be attributed to the fact that, to him, the Italian campaign then consisted of the few hundred yards of front where his division had fought. Things had not gone well there. He and his fellow G. I.s felt that they had been beating their heads against a stone wall at a stiff price in casualties. But it seemed a strange question from one who, looking on from a distance, could see the entire pattern of the war in the west and, I thought, could thus view the Italian campaign as a part of the means by which we were working to the ultimate end—the destruction of Germany.

The surprise soon wore off. The question asked by the factory owner is the one which has been asked of me most often in the few weeks I have been home. Now that the Allies have launched a new offensive in Italy, it's fitting to try to answer that question within the restrictions of military security.

Perhaps the most important factor in the Italian mainland campaign is that it was a necessary preliminary to the capitulation of Italy, the repercussions of which were felt immediately all over Hitler's European Fortress.

The Italian divisions, properly distributed by the Germans among their own Wehrmacht divisions, had been a tremendous factor in lessening the manpower shortage which was daily growing more serious for both the German industrial and war machines.

Much of the detail of what happened to Italian divisions after the capitulation of the Badoglio government is locked inside Hitler's Europe. But we can reasonably assess what their loss meant to Germany from the little knowledge we have.

Several Italian divisions were fighting with the Germans in Russia. Others were holding the guerrilla forces of Marshal Tito in Yugoslavia in check. And still others in Yugoslavia were keeping an eye on government forces under General Mihailovich. Still other Italian units were dispersed throughout the Dodecanese Islands. When Badoglio announced the armistice, the Germans were forced to draw on their slender strategic reserves

(Continued on page 60)

LISTEN, LADY. YOU TOO, MARINE

IF Wags eyed his reflection in the pet-shop windowpane, he saw two or three chubby pounds of hair, hide, feet, pointed ears, and a spike—very busy—that would some day be a collie's plume. But he had small time for self-viewing. Too many people out there. People who, catching sight of five pups through the glass, pushed and crowded close.

Wags could tell which ones he liked. Puppies are gifted that way. If his legs raced him forward and his stern went around like a windmill, he knew he'd spotted one who was meant for friendship. If his legs backed him away and a growl curled out of his throat, somebody out there was no good.

This morning he liked the young man at the far left. He liked the girl at the far right too. He accepted the policeman who crouched with hands on knees and barked like a dog. He got a happy bristling of his hackles from the freckled boy who put grimy hands up like ears and yowled like a cat. But he wasted no love on the fat-cheeked lady who pushed her nose against the glass and made a moist red rose of her lips. He growled at her and backed away, falling over Mops, Boots, Rags, Butch, and a saucer of water.

The fat-cheeked lady entered the store. She gave off a wave of sweet dust. Wags sneezed. She asked questions of Gus, the storekeeper. Wags heard his own name spelled out for her—W-a-g-s. When Gus told her that, her eyes went little and her mouth went small and round. She looked down over the wire screen at the back of the window. She said to Wags, "Well! I'll soon see if you can do your stuff for me, luckpiece." She walked out fast, her heels striking sharply on the wooden floor. Heels, thought Wags, that if they came down on your tail would hurt like knives.

The freckled boy went away on roller skates. The cop straightened up and moved off with dignity as another policeman came in sight with three stripes on his sleeve.

That left the girl and the young man. Wags found his tail going at top speed. Girl and man were both in uniform. The girl had a dark blue suit, shirt with silver bar at collar, black shoulder bag, and hat with an ornament. The hat scooped down in front and could be wonderful for chewing. The man was in grayish green. He was deeply tanned and wore a cocky cap. There was a row of colors over his heart. His shirt neck didn't have a shiny bar.

The girl tapped the pane with a white-gloved finger. Wags started across the sawdust toward her. The man tapped his part of the window. That made Wags stop and turn. The girl stiffened slightly. She rapped again. And the man rapped. Wags' feet tried to obey both, slid out, and he landed on his backside. Girl and man laughed. But that must have been not quite the thing for her to do, for she stopped it at once. The man gravely brought the edge of his fingers to his cocky cap and saluted. She returned his salute and hurried off.

The young man looked after her very intently. He stared until her spruce young back was lost in the crowd. When he turned again to Wags, he whistled. The whistle, Wags felt, wasn't just for him. The young man grinned. There was fellowship in that grin. Presently he tossed Wags a salute too, a much more informal one than he'd given the blue-tailored girl, and sauntered off.

A lot can happen in a few hours. It proceeded to do so to Wags. In the first place, he and Butch learned a sly new style of moving on their sister Mops, pouncing fast and pulling her two ways at once. In the second place, Mops was sold right out of the window to a little girl who had come in with her daddy to buy a rabbit but who took sudden pity on the bedeviled Mops instead. In the third place, Boots and Rags and Butch were sold too, to a variety of people. Good enough people, probably, though none of them with any special appeal for Wags. Wags dodged their attention by turning his back, pretending to scratch, yawning, and going to sleep. When he woke up and found even Butch gone—not one playmate left—he felt lonesome. But only for a minute. For that was when a tremendous thing happened.

A pup in a pet-shop window is anybody's prey who has the price. But Wags promoted a romance and thus secured his own future

Horses went by. Two horses.

They were hitched to a wagon. Every other vehicle Wags had ever seen moved up or down the street by its own impulse. But this wagon was drawn by two beasts whose great chests pressed on their harness, whose necks arched, whose feet hit the pavement with a proud rhythm. Wags instantly knew what they were. How did he know? He couldn't have told. Some deep racial memory was at the bottom of it. But he knew. Those heavy fellows were horses. Work horses. With an honest, useful job to do.

Because Wags was a collie, of a long line of dogs who had done their loyal part in the world's toil, he abruptly sensed other things. Fields. Sheep. Cattle. He raced up and down behind the window glass, barking with all his might. He wanted to follow those horses, to join in the job they did. But they passed on, *clop-clopping* in majesty up the street. They ceased to be a sound or even a magnificent whiff.

That was the biggest affair so far, but the day wasn't over. Not half. At noon the girl with the blue-and-white hat came back. Wags had almost forgotten how bright and pretty she was, how tidy and assured and well carried. Now she seemed still nicer. While she stood out there, the whole window grew warmer. She smiled at Wags, and the smile ran up into her eyes and made little crinkles in her cheeks.

She must have come this second time for no other purpose than to see him. She tapped on the glass. She laughed merrily when he sprang up and fell all over his overgrown feet. She came on into the store, reached over the wire fence, and tickled his ribs. Wags tried to tell her, with his whole range of barks, what a morning this had been—brothers and sisters sold, and *horses* going by. She didn't seem to understand all of this, but she pulled off a white glove and let him nuzzle her fingertips. They were delicious fingertips. She asked Gus the small dog's name and price.

Wags' heart almost stopped beating. But when Gus told the sum, twenty-five dollars, she colored up and confessed she didn't have it. She murmured about having bought a bond, whatever that was, and had pledged to buy another every payday. She scratched Wags behind the ears a while longer with that pleasant finger. She seemed to be thinking and thinking. Finally she gave him a good rolling and went away. She turned and waved. Her blue-and-white hat, her straight tailored back disappeared up the sidewalk. Wags could have howled for disappointment. He did howl.

That, however, wasn't all. Half an hour later the young man showed up. He grinned again at Wags through the plate glass and whistled a whistle which this time was all for him. A whistle which, out in the open, Wags knew he'd have responded to at once over the widest spaces. The young man came on into the shop. He reached over the barrier and boxed the pup around. He stopped playing and let the little fellow savor his hand.

Curious thing about that hand. There were three levels of odors in it, and below the soap and tobacco, which was the first level, they seemed to unfold pictures that were strange and exciting. Gun oil and gunpowder were at the second level—scents that Wags didn't have names for, but they told him that their bearer had been in places calling for manliness and vigor. And beneath that level, like a rare old buried bone, the hint of sagebrush and saddle leather.

The young man gave Wags plenty of time to study and ponder all this. By and by he lifted Wags' paw and shook it. Solemnly. As if he and Wags were pals. That suited Wags. The young man asked Gus the pup's price. Gus named it.

The young man evidently should have asked the price sooner. For there was no such sum in his pockets. He turned them out and proved the point to Gus. He offered what there was.

There was no use arguing with Gus about a price.

The young man put his pockets back in place and stood looking down at Wags for quite a while. "Too bad, old fellow," he said finally. He added something about a first-class private of Marines not rating very high with the paymaster general. With a last rumpling that sprawled the small dog on beam ends, he went away.

For the second time Wags knew that kind of hunger inside of him that not even four-o'clock supper would fix.

AND nearly at closing time, she came again. The girl with the blue-and-white hat.

She was radiant. She marched right in and reached over and tumbled Wags about. "I've been to the admiral," she whispered. "He's a gruff old thing—and a dear. I borrowed twenty-five!" There was a singing in the way she whispered it.

When Wags tried to tell her how overjoyed he was, with every inch of him going all ways at once, another person strode into the shop. He must have been loitering close by. The one who'd called him "old

BY NEILL C. WILSON

ILLUSTRATED BY JAY NOURBEL

fellow." He grabbed Wags' chin and looked straight into the small dog's eyes, paying no attention at all to the girl with the white-and-blue hat who was tweaking Wags' ribs.

At this piece of impertinence the girl straightened. Two red spots sprang into her cheeks. Wags sensed a scrap in the making. Would these two humans start walking around each other high on their toes, baring teeth and snarling? With a yip, tear in? No. What they did was to turn their shoulders to each other and state to Gus, distinctly:

"I'll take him!"

"Eh?" Gus looked from one to the other. "Who said that?"

"*I* said it." Realizing that they had again spoken in one voice, they turned and looked at each other. The bronzed young man grinned and saluted. The girl returned his salute, with a bit of a glare. The red spots in her cheeks deepened.

"Hey, wait. Don't get worked up," urged Gus in a hurry. "Which one of you has the twenty-five dollars?"

"I have it here." "*I* have it." The voices again ran together. The girl zipped her shoulder bag open. The man fumbled in his breast pocket. Green bills sprouted.

"Ain't it always the way?" moaned Gus. "Wouldn't it be like this? Why couldn't there be one more pup in that litter?"

Assured the girl, "It wouldn't matter to me if there were a dozen. This is the little fellow I want."

"But this is the chap I'm buying," insisted the young man. "I rolled a sergeant for the money, and I took him. With his bones, too." Man and girl were really trading warlike looks now.

"Listen, lady—I mean commodore, or whatever. You too, marine. Let's not have a Pearl Harbor," pleaded Gus. "I been in the middle before when two people wanted a dog. Last time, they busted me a parrot cage and two fish bowls. Can't you roll for him?"

"Throw dice with a marine?" cried the girl. "I wouldn't stand a ghost of a chance. Besides, I'm an officer."

"Anyway, the sarge kept the dice," said the marine.

Pronounced Gus, "All right. Stand a few steps apart, please. What we'll do—we'll let the pup himself decide!"

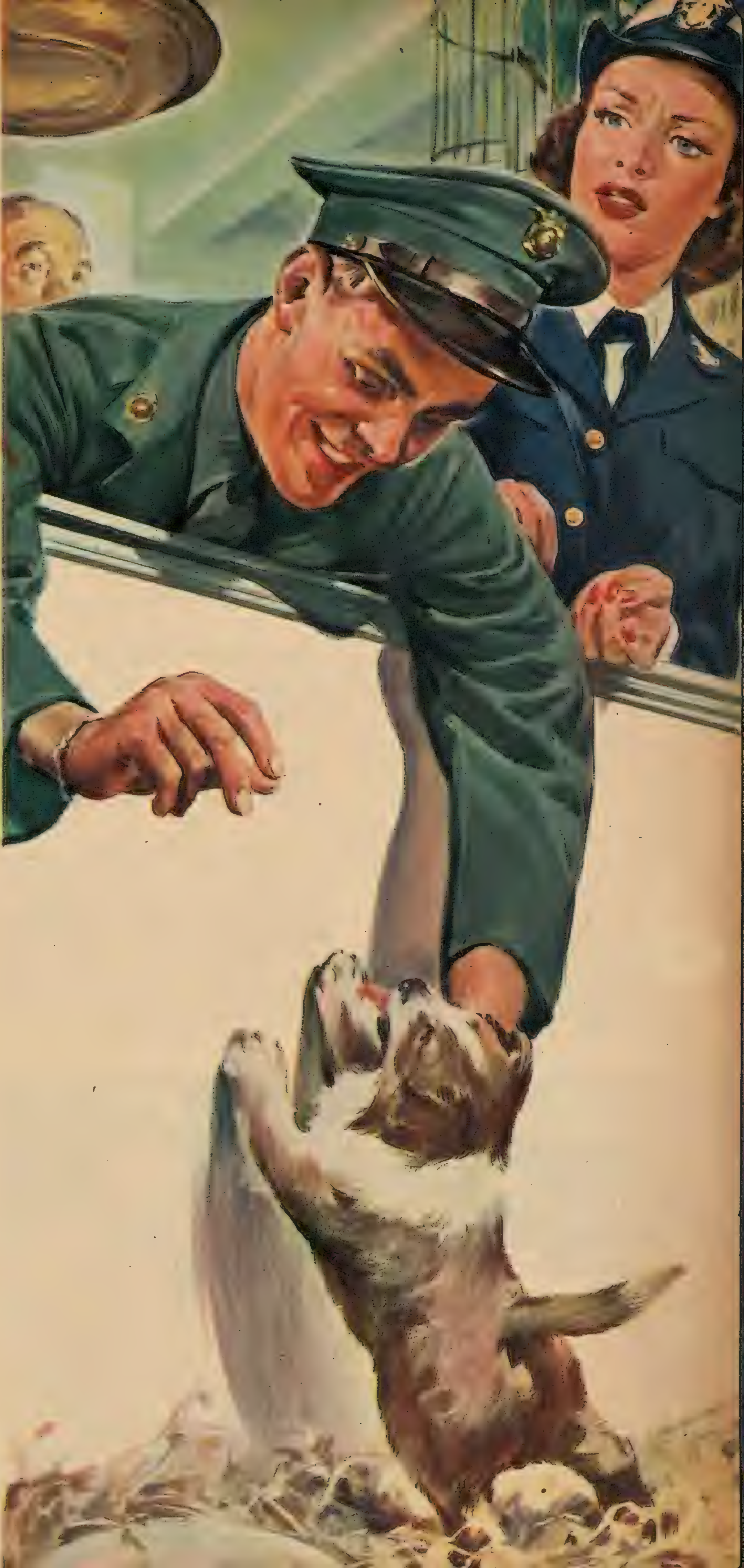
WAGS was swung out of the window by Gus's big hand and dropped down in the middle of the floor.

The marine went down on one knee and spoke to the dog. As man to man. "You'll come with me, won't you, chum?" Looking up to the girl, he added, "I give my seat to ladies in buses and that sort of thing. I love to push revolving doors around for them. And when they're lieutenants as well as ladies, I even yield my berth to them on trains. But this isn't a G. I. case. This matter is drastic. It concerns the whole future of a *dog*."

The girl crouched too, swiftly and gracefully. "But I want you, Wags—terribly. And you want me, don't you, little friend?"

This wasn't fair. Wags was in a jam. He looked at the marine, who was snapping fingers and calling, "Here, Wags! Here, Wags!" He looked at the girl. Nobody,

(*Continued on page 69*)



He looked into the small dog's eyes, paying no attention at all to the girl.

BOYINGTON, LOST ACE

BY FRED HAMPSON

SOUTH PACIFIC CORRESPONDENT, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barakoma Airfield, Vella Lavella.

WE were sitting around the press tent in the pilots' camp above Barakoma airstrip on Vella Lavella island, waiting for Major Gregory Boyington to get his twenty-sixth Jap airplane. Seven days before he had shot down his twenty-fifth over Rabaul's Vunakanau field. That was one short of the record of twenty-six kills credited to Joe Foss, ace of Guadalcanal, and Eddie Rickenbacker of World War I. It looked as though he couldn't miss. He was the deadliest shot in the South Pacific, and the hunting was good. The Japs were clouding the skies over Rabaul with fighters trying to ward off the bomber strikes. Boyington was scheduled out every second or third day, but for a while he flew almost daily.

He faced three handicaps. He was flying bomber cover a lot and had to stay on position. The rainy season had arrived in the Solomons, and on some days our airmen couldn't get over the target or find the Japs if they did. Finally, his third and last tour of duty was nearing its end. At thirty-one he was well beyond what the services consider a good age for fighters. There was scant chance of a fourth tour. It was now or never.

The fighters at Barakoma usually return from Rabaul raids about 2 P. M. We all went down to Boyington's revetment about that time and waited. There was a radio recording hookup and the Marine Corps and Navy photo sections had cameramen there. We felt that this might be one of the great moments in the history of aviation.

Members of the Black Sheep squadron—Boyington's—began coming in. The first to get its wheels on the coral runway was No. 214.

"Two fourteen is Olander," said Lieutenant Frank "Red" Walton, intelligence officer who was also the mother-hen, father-confessor, and double-barreled disciplinarian for the hard-fighting, high-strung enthusiasts who made up the Black Sheep squadron. Red is a former Los Angeles policeman and international swimming champion and, although no flyer himself, he alone could break up a Black Sheep victory celebration and put the brood of eagles to bed without a protest.

He strove to break Rick's record — and on his last mission tied it—but failed to return. He left behind a story which has become a legend of the Pacific air

Two more planes landed and Red checked them off. A fourth plane drilled in at 160 miles an hour, its flaps shot out of commission. The pilot managed to brake it to a stop at the far end.

Finally they were all in but two.

The daily lines of anxiety began to seam Red's weathered face.

"The skipper's usually in before this."

A murmur swept over the waiting crowd. Maybe he'd run out of gas and landed at Torokina on Bougainville. Maybe the plane had been shot up and he'd had to stay over for repairs. Maybe this, maybe that.

Nobody suggested the skipper might have been shot down. Tojo didn't have a man who could stay on Boyington's tail long enough to do any harm.

But it came on 3:30 and he wasn't back, and neither was his wingman.

"Go up to operations and see if they've heard anything from Torokina," Red ordered a member of the revetment crew. "See if they've heard anything from Munda or Ondonga or Segi or—hell, see if they've heard from anywhere."

The kid bolted up the hill to the operations hut. He came back slowly, his face white and unbelieving.

"Well?"

"He's lost, sir. He ain't at Torokina. He ain't at any field. He's missing."

"They can't be sure yet," fumed Red. "He could still be in the air."

This was not true and Red knew it. Boyington had been out of gas half an hour ago, and been down at least twenty-five minutes ago. You can't glide around long in a dead Corsair. They weigh about six tons, and when the propeller stops they come down in a hurry.

Still everybody hung around the revetment. One of the returning pilots walked up from the readyroom.

"Skipper in?"

"Nope," said Red. "Looks kinda bad. He's not at Torokina. Did you get any contacts? Did you see him in a fight?"

"The place was full of Zeros. There wasn't anything but fighting up there.

"I saw the skipper and Ashmun [wingman] jump two Japs. We know he got one, saw it burn. He's tied the record at least. Got her in the wing roots. Gas tank exploded. I think Ashmun got the other one."

"See any more?" pursued Red. The record had become secondary.

"Yes, we were over a cloud layer, but a hole opened and there were five Japs un-

U. S. MARINE CORPS PHOTOS

They licked the Japs where they found them—in the air or on the ground. Boyington and some of the Black Sheep.

derneath. The skipper and Ashmun went down through after them. The skipper got one or two more. I'd bet my beer ration on that, but the clouds closed and I couldn't see. That's all I know."

That was all anybody knew.

Below that layer of clouds the third American ace of aces disappeared at the instant he joined Foss and Rickenbacker in the twenty-six-plane triumvirate.*

In the movies it would be labeled pure corn. Things like that don't happen.

That night in the pilot camp was little different from other nights. They ate and went to the movie in the enlisted men's mess hall and smoked around the tents afterward. When the skipper was mentioned at all it was with an exaggerated hope that he would be speedily picked up.

But, having been around the camp long enough to get the temper of the place, I could feel the difference. The vacant cot in tent 17 was in everybody's mind and on almost nobody's tongue. The men had lost a great leader and beloved pal; but, more than that, they had lost the fountainhead of their flaming spirit.

What manner of man was this thirty-one-year-old Idaho-bred hell-for-leather air ace who kept the fighting blood pumping in this eager squadron of Jap-killers? Everyone who knew him agreed he was one of the great personality forces in the war. He was the aviator's aviator, a man they were glad to follow and, to the limit of their ability, imitate. To the Black Sheep he was the ultimate virtuoso of the fighter flyers, the aerial artist, the technical and tactical wise man. And a great guy. A hell of a great guy.

Said one Black Sheep: "He looked better missing a Zero by a hundred feet than I do putting a burst into a cockpit."

And though he would never have done on a magazine cover, yet in the cockpit of a Corsair waiting his turn on the line, with the motor blowing a 2,000-horsepower wind along a fuselage that was greasy and weathered and patched, he looked right. Cocky, homely, steely-eyed. He made you whistle under your breath.

BOYINGTON started fighting with the Flying Tigers when he was already a gray-beard of fighter flyers, because he needed the money. Once in, he fought because he loved it. He referred to the Japs with highly original profanity but actually he was, like so many other good soldiers, a fairly impersonal fighter.

He came into the Solomons last year at thirty with a reputation as a first-class raiser of plain and fancy hell. He lived up to it. He cut a swath from Espiritu Santos to Rabaul that won't soon be forgotten. The Japs knew and hated him.

A sibilant Jap at Kahili on Bougainville fished for the American wave length one day and simpered:

"Major Boyington, what is your position, please?"

Replied Boyington: "Right over your —— —— airfield. Come on up and fight."

The Japs sent up forty Zeros. The Black Sheep returned fourteen of them in flames in about as many minutes. The remainder retreated into a cloud. The Black Sheep lost nobody. That was the day Boyington got his nineteenth.

He had six Jap planes to his credit as a Tiger. When the Tigers were disbanded he petitioned for reinstatement in the Marine Corps, got it, and was attached to the

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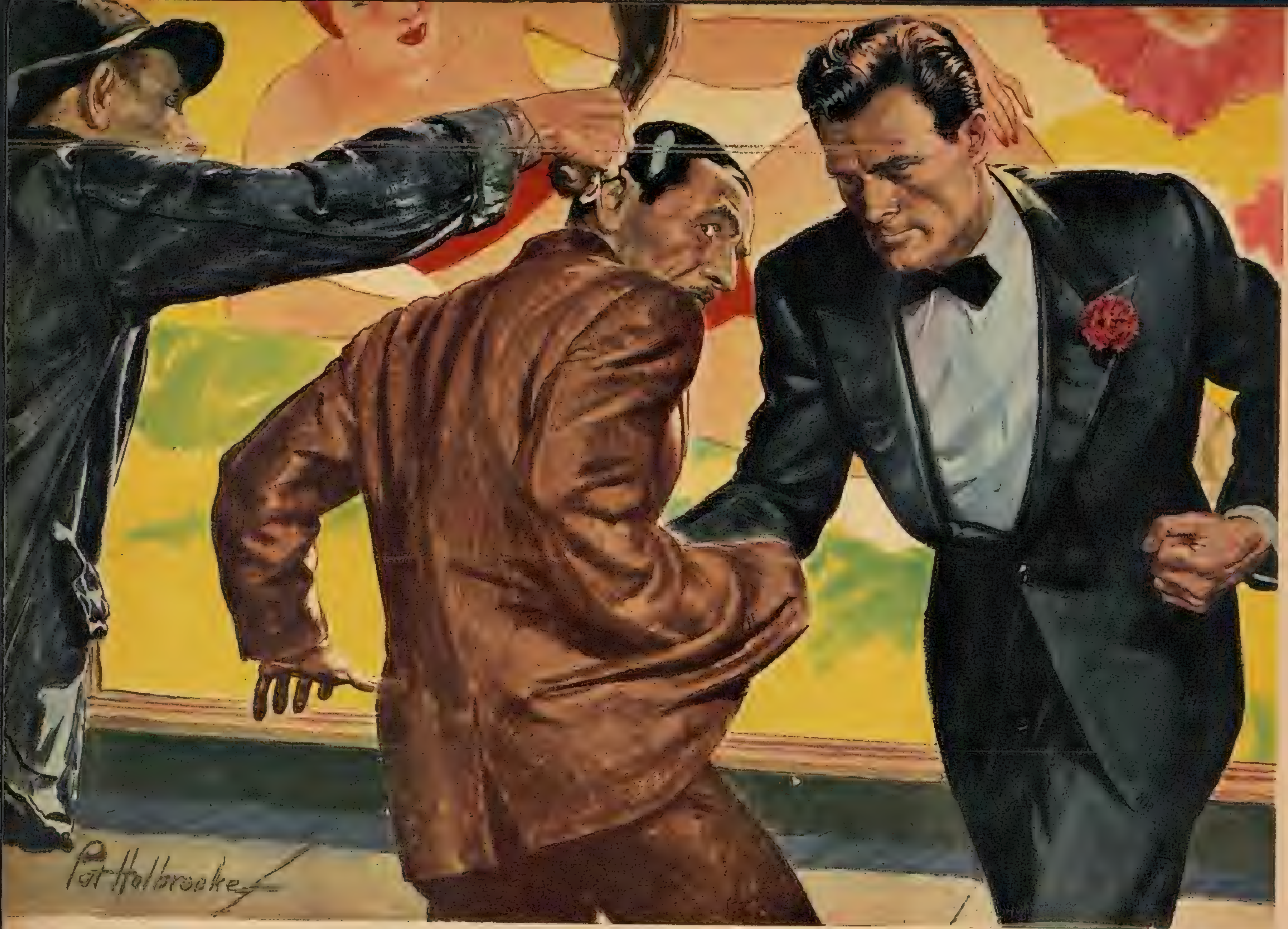
* Major Richard Ira Bong of Wisconsin has since become the first officially to surpass Rickenbacker's record, having scored his twenty-seventh Jap kill in April.

(*Continued on page 58*)

Boyington, the cocky, homely, steel-eyed air fighter. Was he adding Jap No. 27 to his list when he disappeared?



Whit hit Sammy a tremendous blow in the bread basket just as Casey's sandbag came down on Sammy's head.

BULLETS FOR THE BRIDEGROOM

BY DAVID DODGE

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT HOLBROOKE

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

JAMES WHITNEY and Kitty MacLeod arrived at Pop Foster's, J. P., in the middle of the night to be married. Their haste was due to the fact that Whit expected soon to be in the Army. They were greeted at Pop's door by Walter Gates and Sammy Kohler. Finally Pop appeared, sadly changed from the man Whit had known. Puzzled by the menacing attitude of Gates and Kohler, Whit and Kitty fled.

While waiting for the city clerk's office in Reno to open, the young couple visited Lorenzo's, swanky gambling club. There they met Colusa, manager; Gladys Warren, beauteous blonde; and Jess Caldwell. Whit was suspicious of Caldwell's overfriendliness.

While waiting for a cab to take them to City Hall, Whit recognized Casey Jones, one-time prosperous electrical engineer, now looking like a bum.

That evening Pete Weston, A. P. correspondent, phoned. He had been a mutual friend of Casey and Whit. The latter told his wife it was odd the two men should be in Reno at the same time.

Pete told the Whitneys that he cleared all Reno war news. There was plenty, as near by were a big Army command, training bases, and a large Navy ammunition depot. He seemed surprised to learn that Casey was in town.

Casey stole into Whit and Kitty's bedroom one night and told them he was wanted for murder in the East and that he was looking for the real criminal in Reno.

A shabby hat almost lands Whit in jail, accused of Pop Foster's murder, and Casey at last reveals the incredible story behind his Reno masquerade

Horseback riding the next day, husband and wife passed Pop's house. Pete Weston was there and told them Pop had been murdered!

PART THREE

THEY sat under a tree in the yard while Pete told them of Pop Foster's death.

Pop's house guests, Gates and Kohler, had been wakened in the middle of the night by the howling of Gates' dog. They had turned on the yard lights, and when the dog kept up its howling, Pop had come downstairs with a shotgun and they had all gone out to look around.

Gates and Kohler had been at the upper end of the yard and Pop at the other when there was a shot. Gates and Kohler had run around the house in time to see a man making a getaway down the creek bed which ran along the back of the property. Gates had picked up Pop's shotgun and fired, but the man in the creek bed returned the fire with a pistol, so they did not follow him. Pop had been shot once, in the back, and was dead when they found him. Gates had called the sheriff immediately.

Whit said, "Where are Gates and Kohler now?"

"They went into town with the body, to give their statements to a stenographer."

Whit said, "Pete, I asked you last night about those guys. Kitty and I were out here two nights ago. They were here then, and they had Pop scared green. And Kohler had a gun. I think he killed Pop."

"That's a pretty strong statement," Pete said slowly. "He didn't have a gun when the sheriff got here."

"That doesn't mean anything. Their whole story stinks, Pete—all that guff about a mysterious stranger in the creek bed. What evidence is there that there was such a man?"

"Footprints. And a hat he lost getting away. The sheriff has it now." Pete took a notebook from his pocket. "Here's Gates' description of the stranger: About six feet, weight a hundred and ninety to two hundred, dark hair, clean-shaven." Pete looked up. "That's pretty good for someone you saw running away in the middle of the night, isn't it? Even with those high-powered lights."

KITTY said, "Oh!"

Whit said, "It's too good."

"I thought so myself," Pete said. "I got the impression that they knew the man they wanted to identify, whether they saw him or not. I thought you ought to know about it before the sheriff starts asking questions."

"Why me?"

"Don't be stupid," Kitty said. She was worried. "That's your description."

"By heavens, so it is!"

They were all silent for a few moments. Whit said, "What time was the shooting?"

"Twelve twenty-five. We confirmed the time Gates gave us with the neighbors up the road. They heard the gunfire."

"I was at Jess Caldwell's apartment at twelve twenty-five."

Pete shook his head. "You left at twelve five, and you reached the hotel at ten minutes to one. I checked up as soon as I heard that description. You were nearly an hour getting from Caldwell's apartment to the hotel—half a mile."

"We stopped to talk." Kitty was getting more and more uneasy. "Pete, you don't think—"

Pete said honestly, "No, I don't. But the sheriff may."

Kitty said, "Well, then, we've got to do something. Whit, you tell Pete everything that happened when we were here the other night, and see what he thinks."

Pete listened intently to Whit's story, and wagged his head wonderingly when it was finished. "It beats me. You're sure you never saw Gates or Kohler before?"

"Positive."

"Then why should they try to pin Pop's murder on you?"

"I don't know. But why don't we go talk to the sheriff and see what he has to say? I might as well beat him to the punch. Is he here?"

"He's in the house. I guess it'll be all right if we talk to him. But don't tell him what you've told me, Whit. It would look bad if you began explaining things too soon. He's a pretty smart old codger. I know him and I can handle him. You keep quiet."

"Good enough."

They found the sheriff in the Victorian parlor. He was a grizzled Bill Hart, with a handle-bar mustache and a Stetson bigger than Whit's. Pete introduced Mr. and Mrs. Whitney as a couple of Pop's friends who had been riding by and had seen the commotion. They had called on Pop two nights before, and they were naturally shocked to hear of his death. Mr. Whitney was anxious to help, if he could.

The sheriff said, "Shore. I know how you feel. But I guess we can handle it all right."

His eyes were measuring Whit—not the vivid cowboy costume, but height, build, and color. Whit could see that the sheriff was as sharp as Pete's warning had indicated.

The sheriff said, "Course, we like all the help we can get now. We've got sort of a description of the man who done the shooting. Maybe you could help identify him for us."

"Glad to try," Whit said. "What did he look like?"

"About yore size, I'd say. Yore weight, dark hair—guess he must have looked something like you. Don't know anyone like that, do you?" The sheriff smiled. His eyes were alert.

"It's a pretty general description. Might fit a lot of men."

"Yep. Guess yo're right." The sheriff scratched his chin, and looked at the red plush settee, where there was a paper bag which held something bulky. He took a dirty felt hat from the bag and held it out.

"Ever see that before?"

Whit looked at the hat without expression. "No."

"Try it on."

Whit looked up with the proper amount of surprise in his face. The sheriff smiled. Whit put it on, and it slid down to rest on his ears. Kitty giggled nervously. Whit took it off and handed it back to the sheriff.

That was all for the time being. The sheriff let them go with the understanding—course it was only a suggestion—that it'd be a good idea if they'd plan to stay around town for a while. Then he buttonholed Pete and took him away. Whit and Kitty went back to the horses.

Whit sang no more songs as they rode back to the livery stable, and he wasn't communicative. When they were at last in the car, driving back to Reno, he got around to talking.

"Damn it," he said. "I wish I hadn't seen that hat."

"Why, honey?"

"It belongs to Casey Jones."

AFTER Walter Gates and Sammy Kohler had given their depositions to the stenographer at the sheriff's office, they were free to go. In the street, Gates said, "Where did you hide the gun?"

"Under the house. They won't find it."

"I hope you're right. It will be bad for you if they do. How sure are you that it was Whitney?"

"Who else could it have been?"

"I asked you a question."

"Well, it looked like him," Sammy answered. His weasel face was sullen.

Gates said unemotionally, "I should have known it. Before the sheriff got there you swore it was Whitney. Now you don't know."

"But—"

"Shut up," Gates said. "I want to think."

They walked on. Gates said, "We've got to have an address to give the sheriff. You go back to Foster's house, pack up our clothes, and bring them back to town in the truck. Rent a place somewhere and leave the clothes there. I'll meet you at five o'clock at Second and Virginia."

Sammy said uneasily, "I don't like to go back there, Walter. What if they've found something?"

"There isn't anything to find, unless it's your gun. You'll have to get that."

"Maybe it would be better if I waited till tonight, huh?"

"I've got a job for you tonight."

Sammy reluctantly shuffled away.

Gates found a telephone booth in a drugstore down the street and called Jess Caldwell. Caldwell had a report for him.

"I was just talking to San Francisco," Caldwell said. "You were right about your friend's credentials."

"I thought so. Have you heard the news?"

"Nothing in particular," Caldwell answered cautiously.

"I'll be up to see you in a few minutes. We're going to have to call him in and ask him a few questions."

"Is it that bad?"

"It's always bad," said Gates. "Good-by."

IT was the middle of the evening when Casey Jones, watching Lorenzo's Club from the pool hall on the opposite corner, saw Whit searching the alley and the parking lot behind the club. Casey scowled. Whit was clearly looking for someone, and Casey had an idea he knew who the someone was. He was momentarily relieved when Whit finished the search and started to work his way methodically down Center Street, nosing through the early evening crowds, but his worries came back sharply when he saw Sammy Kohler inconspicuously following at Whit's heels.

Whit was not moving too fast to miss seeing the faces of everybody who passed him, and Casey had time to get out the back entrance of the pool hall and up to the next corner before Sammy went by, still on Whit's trail. Casey fell unobtrusively into line behind Sammy.

The three men kept their relative positions for the next two hours, the time it took Whit to work his way up Center Street, back down Virginia Street, and ultimately away from the bright lights to the shabbier joints along the railroad tracks, still searching. Once Casey fell behind long enough to take off a sock near a convenient sand pile left by some street-repair crew, and when he picked up the trail again he wore one shoe on a bare foot and carried the sand-filled sock in his pocket.

Whit finally turned down a side street which was a short cut back to Lorenzo's Club and a new start. He paid no attention to the light footsteps behind him until he felt something hard nudge him in the backbone. He stopped and turned around.

"Keep moving, smart guy," said Sammy. His weasel eyes gleamed. "You and me are going places." The gun in his coat pocket jabbed Whit roughly in the belly.

Casey covered the last ten feet in a couple of jumps. Whit saw the dark shape over Sammy's shoulder, and his eyes flickered. As Sammy swung on his heel, Whit hit him a tremendous blow in the bread basket just as Casey's sandbag came down on Sammy's head.

There was a shout at the far end of the street as Sammy went down, and a couple of passers-by came running up from the corner. Casey gave Whit a shove to get him started.

"Come on! Let's get out of here!"

Whit didn't argue. They doubled two corners at a run, and did not stop for breath until they were a safe three blocks away.

"Slick as a whistle," Casey said cheerfully. He emptied sand from his sock.

(*Continued on page 48*)

"Back the Attack—Buy More Bonds!"—and they will, for that's Ted Gamble at the mike. Below: A front view of National Director Ted.

SOLD—TO 55,000,000 PEOPLE!

BY EDITH M. STERN

THE biggest merchandising job in history is selling U. S. war bonds, and Ted R. Gamble is its presiding genius. If you don't know who Ted R. Gamble is, you won't be required to go to the foot of the class, because he is better known to night elevator operators at the United States Treasury than he is to newspaper columnists.

If you were asked why you buy war bonds you would probably answer, fairly, that it is because you are patriotic. But, probably unknown to yourself, you also buy them for the same reason that you buy your favorite cigarettes, cosmetics, and shoes.

The best brains of America have been applied to familiarizing you with the Treasury's product; to keeping you convinced that it's good to buy; to staging periodic drives as department stores run special sales; to advertising it on a national scale; and to creating a huge sales organization of more than 5,000,000 volunteers that fans out into every nook and corner of the United States.

That's where the presiding genius of Ted Gamble, National Director of the War Finance Division of the U. S. Treasury, comes into play. He is also the owner of a chain of theaters in the Northwest, and, while the connection may not hit you between the eyes right off the bat, it ties up with selling Tom, Dick, and Harry the bonds that pay for the war. "A good movie operator," says Gamble, "knows better than anyone else in the community what folks are thinking."

There's a lot of selling know-how behind the big totals rolled up in bond drives. It's not just left to chance, even though a man named Gamble handles the promotion

Gamble is thirty-eight years old, charming, poised and soft spoken. He was born in Nevada, Missouri, near the middle of a family of fifteen. When one of his numerous brothers was mustered out of the Army in the state of Washington, the family moved there, and in 1922 Ted attended Washington State University. Evenings, he managed a theater. That involved everything from janitor work up—booking films, advertising, arranging stage shows, giving the customers what they wanted and inducing them to want what they got.

So fascinated was he by show business that after two years he quit college to take a job as manager of five theaters. By 1929 he was general manager of a chain of twenty-nine, and in 1939 he owned his own theaters in Oregon, where he lived.

During the summer of 1941, as state administrator of the Defense Savings Campaign, he organized committees and subcommittees and sub-sub committees in every county. Thanks to this thorough coverage, Oregon had the best sales record of any of the states. As a result, Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau called

(*Continued on page 55*)

LIMIT OF DARKNESS

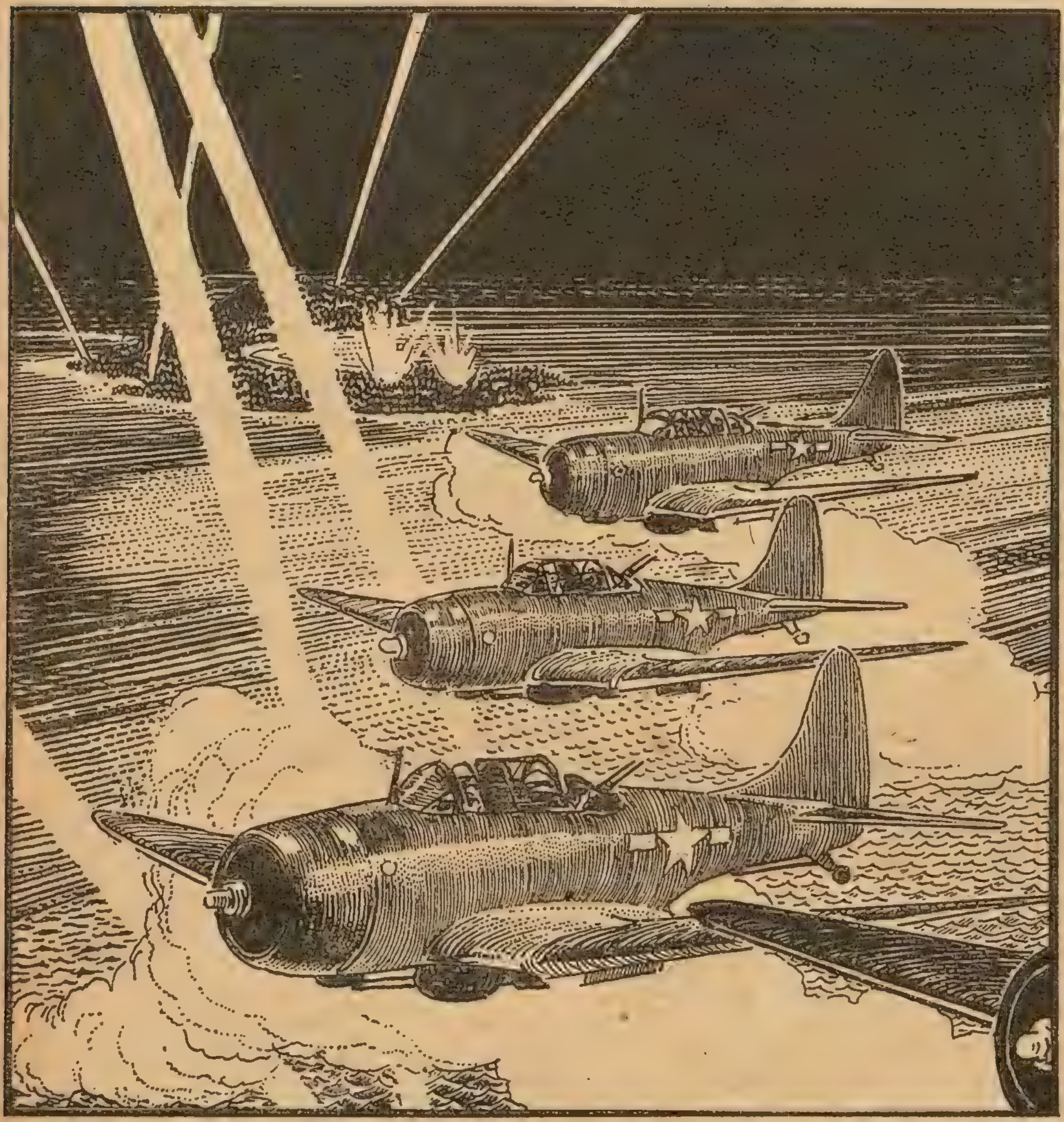
A Condensation
of the Novel
by

HOWARD HUNT

This is what they are doing. This is how they live and what they think – the men whose planes lash at the enemy above the islands of the Pacific.

This is what they remember of their wives – and the girls they knew. This is what they knew of love in the past – of what they can snatch of love in the present and how they hope for the future.

It is such a close-to-action novel that you will live with these men every word of the way, and we think you'll never forget them.



A *Liberty* BOOK CONDENSATION
READING TIME ONE EVENING

ILLUSTRATED BY
FREDERICK CHAPMAN

Morning

Five O'Clock

THE sun of the South Pacific came up slowly over the eastern tip of Guadalcanal in the Solomons. Its warm light touched the coral reefs and shallows of the little bays offshore, then crept along to the beaches and the jungle—its rays moving over the trees and the vines of the jungle peaks until they lighted the end of the bomber strip at Henderson Field.

And, as the sun warmed the jungle, it killed the mists that had clung to it during the night. They lifted and died as they became transparent and harmless, and the birds shrieked their protests as they flew from tree to tree trying to escape the coming of the day.

The clouds that had hung low over Kokumbona, smothering its hills in layers of mist, retreated upward, leaving below on the grasses and the leaves a cool, heavy dew. Sealark Channel, between Guadalcanal and Tulagi Harbor, swelled a little as the tide began to change, glittering back at the pale morning sky.

The square green canvas tents of the men were damp with the night dews, and, as the sun rose, the slanted sides began to stream.

Lieutenant (j. g.) Ben Lambert lay on his back staring up at the ridgepole of the tent. He had wakened, as he always did, when the first Dauntless zoomed the field. He realized that it was morning and that he had not been flying the night before. Because he flew almost every night, he was surprised, until he remembered that weather had called off the strike. He was not yet enough awake to look around the tent and see where Joe Cordell was. Lambert closed his eyes and thought about going back to sleep, but the salty sweat stung and he opened his eyes again.

Cordell moved in the cot a few feet away and the flies rose from his netting and buzzed angrily before alighting

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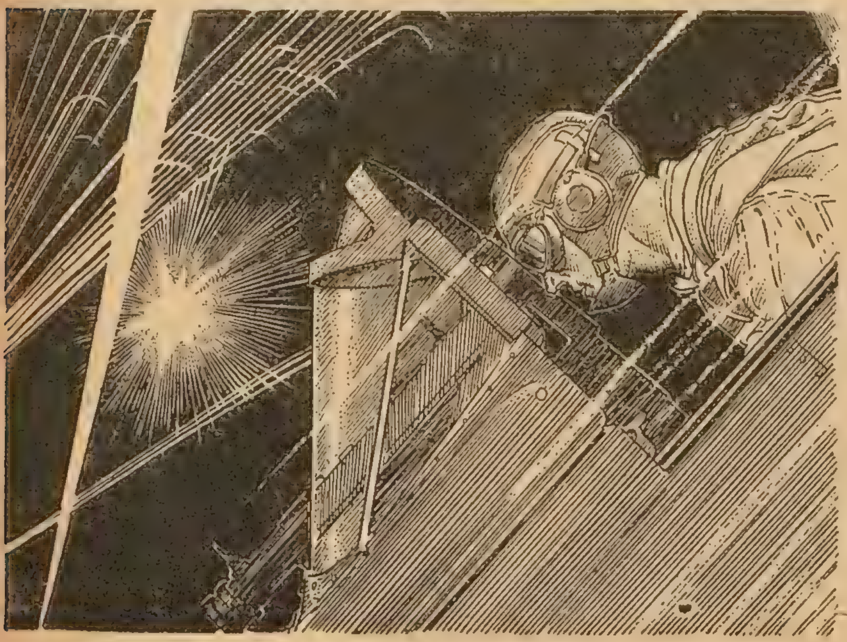
again in their interminable search for food. . . . Or was it the smell of sweat that attracted them? There was a seat beside a table, made from a metal bomb crate that had been cut in half. Where the green paint had chipped off, rust had set in, so that whenever you sat down red oxide dust was ground into the khaki of your rump. No one had bothered to paint over the rust, and he knew that in time the legs would rust through where the paint had chipped around the rivets and some flyer would have a nasty fall. All of this would happen in possibly six months. Lambert turned his head a little more and saw that the bag of candy issued him at mess the night before had been gnawed by the rats. It had spilled onto the rusty green metal seat and some of the pieces had fallen to the floor. The bag was swarming with ants and he watched them climb up and down one leg of the seat in perfectly spaced trails that reached from the floor to the torn paper bag. He drew up his legs to cool his loins, and the flies on his netting buzzed.

The ants continued to ascend and descend unhurriedly



A CATALINA, returning from a patrol up the Slot gunned its engines as it made an approach from the far end of Henderson. Lieutenant Eliot Forsyth turned on his cot, throwing his arm that had been lying on his bare chest against the mosquito netting. He woke a little. hearing the fast swoosh of the Cat overhead as the pilot cut the throttles. He moved his toes and felt the quick small pains that came where the fungus had eaten cracks in the skin. Today would be a good day to wash them in permanganate—if there was any. He was glad the fungus had not reached his ears the way it had McRae's. That was because he had not gone swimming off Lunga Point the way the others did when they first got there. For a while after you got to the islands, you compared every beach to Waikiki, and then after a while you realized that Waikiki was pretty skimpy and littered and touristy, and the beaches that you flew over every day had more natural beauty and color than any in Hawaii. It was a holdover from the old easy life that made you bring the Beach Club complex with you wherever you went. When you finally realized that a beach in the South Pacific was not fundamentally a beautiful place to swim from or play house near, but a wonderful spot to pull yourself up on from the water after you were shot down, you had achieved a great deal of maturity, and that in combat aviation was a highly desirable quality.

JOE CORDELL rolled his tongue inside his mouth, over his teeth and gums, and regretted that he had stayed up so late drinking with Larry McRae. He did not particularly like to drink, but he and Larry were the only two Academy flyers in the squadron, and Cordell felt that it was good to make the others aware of that old school bond whenever possible. He wondered where McRae had picked up that tremendous bottle of whisky. The bottle was about two feet tall and must have held well over a gallon. The original liquor had long since vanished, but the bottle was a kind of squadron trade-mark and the boys who flew back from Sydney or Suva or Noumea were expected to bring back enough to keep it filled.

Cordell's heavy blue-steel beard rasped against the pillow as he turned his head. The sun was coming in through his side of the tent, making the muddy side-wall gauze translucent. He could hear men talking on the other side of the bivouac area as they walked to their tents. Probably P-boat pilots in from a search. He wondered if there was any more shipping in Buin Harbor. The Japs never let very many ships accumulate in their harbors. Two or three at a time were all you could find in the daytime, because they brought in a string of small boats and barges at night and had them unloaded and on their way north before dawn. Last night there had been only three ships off Buin. If the squadron went on the strike tonight, he hoped there would be more. The Japs were getting handy with their searchlights, and at 15,000 feet the ack-ack seemed to fall around you like hail.

BABE LEWIS felt the rumble of the heavy bomb carriers as they moved down the jungle road to the edge of Henderson near the ordnance shacks. He had fallen asleep wearing skivvy shirt and shorts, but during the night the shirt had begun to feel like a warm washcloth and he had struggled out of it.

He looked down the length of the cot, through the netting, and saw his blues hanging from a nail in the tent framework. There were streaks of green-gray mold on the back, and around the single ensign's stripe on the sleeve a thick green fuzz was being nourished by the French gold lace. He wondered why he had brought them with him. The heavy uniforms had been a millstone that stayed with him from island to island until they and he had reached the Solomons. Now they were done for.

Babe lay motionless on his bunk, wondering if Forsyth were awake. He knew he did not rate being quartered with Forsyth, but he was glad to be with him. Lewis was the youngest of his class to get torpedo planes and now he was the youngest TBF pilot at Henderson. It worried him a little when he thought about it that way. The others had been at Midway or the Coral Sea, or had knocked out the Tokyo Express during the early island fighting. Babe had only been on two strikes so far, and he was glad the one last night had been called off. He knew he could not fly up the Slot every night the way the others had—not until he got used to the idea of dying. But he had promised Marge to come back and he would . . . If you didn't think about a thing, it couldn't happen to you. Babe would not think about not coming back. He had too much to live for—Marge and his family and going back to State for his degree when it was over. Babe wondered if he was going to be a father. The mails were so mixed up he couldn't keep track of the letters that were sent, and Marge was too lazy to date them. Something in the last letter made him think she was going to have a child.

In the stillness of the tent he began to feel the desire for his wife. He lay on his cot, feeling lonely and very far away from her. He felt the sweat under his jaws grow cold as he lay there wanting his wife, and then he turned his head when he heard Forsyth start to put on his shoes.

A CORSAIR banked and skidded crazily a few feet above the palms as it practiced strafing runs for the afternoon strike at Vila, and the heavy whine of its propeller overhead woke Squadron Commander Larry McRae. Lying on his back, with his head tilted forward by the bunched-up pillow, he could feel little fingers of sweat rolling down his face, reaching over his cheeks from his black curly hair. He opened his eyes slowly, feeling the heaviness of the lids. His head began to ache and he remembered that he had sat up drinking with Cordell after the strike had been called off. His tent was smaller than the others, but he lived in it alone.

His blue baseball cap lay on the table in the center of the room. Just above the brim were pinned the miniature gold wings of a naval aviator and, above them, the gold leaf of a lieutenant commander. On the middle of the table was his big whisky display bottle. He had got it in Buffalo, when he was testing planes for Curtiss-Wright, by breaking a liquor-store window one night after a bad day at the field. Empty or full, it had been with him for six years. He remembered how his wife had objected to it. Looking at it, he realized that it was only a little over half full. He looked toward the door and saw a Marine orderly from the communications hut. The marine knocked on the door.

"Yes," McRae said.

"Six o'clock, sir," the orderly said.

"Thank you," McRae said. He sat up on the cot and started pulling the mosquito netting from under the mattress. It was almost time for breakfast.

Seven O'Clock

Cordell came into the mess hall followed by Lambert and walked to the table where McRae was sitting.

"'Morning, skipper," he said. "What's the word?"

"It's the same," McRae said, passing him the coffee. "We work harder and get less food every day."

"After a while," Cordell said, "we'll be borrowing rice from Charlie."

"I'll take rice instead of this any day," McRae said. He pushed the atabrine and the salt tablets toward Cordell.

Cordell shook out two salt tablets and an atabrine pill. It was a grain-and-a-half pill and he halved it with his knife blade, dropping the other half back in the bottle.

"How's your malaria?" McRae asked.

"Just fair," Cordell said. "I had one chill a couple of days ago."

"Tell the doc?"

"Hell, no, Larry. We were going up to Kahili that night." Cordell swallowed his pills and took a gulp of coffee. He remembered the chill hitting him in the afternoon and again at night. He remembered his hands shaking on the stick and his teeth chattering so that he could not talk over the radio when McRae called him on the intercom. He reached for the molasses and began pouring it over the pancake the boy had set in front of him.

Most of the officers had left the mess hall. The few who were still there smoked and talked, while the mess boys cleaned off the tables. Forsyth got up from the table and walked over to McRae.

"What's the program today, sir?" he asked.

"I'm not sure yet," McRae said. "I'm going over to Strike Command in a little while and see."

"Think we'll have a strike tonight?"

"I don't know," McRae said. "But the weather looks good enough."

Cordell drank from the metal cup and wiped his hands on his thighs. "That was lousy," he said. "I think I'll go over to sick bay and draw a K-ration for lunch."

McRae laughed. "You're not used to good food like that, Joe. You'll get fat."

"Fat—hell," Cordell said sourly. "I'd be happy if I could get something between my skin and my bones.

"Well," McRae said, "maybe we'll get a Liberty ship in tomorrow."

"If we do, it'll be another six months before she's unloaded. Half the food will be rotten then and none of us will be around to eat the rest."

"You're right, Joe," McRae said soberly. "I wonder if any of us will be alive when the squadron's relieved."

"We're all trying to figure that one out," Joe said. "Each guy probably thinks he'll go back alive and all the rest will get posthumous Navy Crosses."

"It's the only way we can figure it out here," McRae said. "If we didn't think we had at least a chance of getting back we wouldn't be worth a damn—we'd be finished before we got started." He heard Lambert walk up behind him.

"You're wrong, Larry," Lambert said. "It depends on the guy. A guy who's fighting just to get back to the States is only half fighting. But if he thinks about the things we were sent out here to do—if he looks west toward the other islands the Japs have—then when he gets knocked off it may come as a surprise to him, but it won't be a horrible disappointment."

"How many think that way?" Cordell said.

"Not many," Lambert said. "Maybe not enough."

"Do you?"

"Yes. I think I do."

"You're not married," Cordell said.

"No," Lambert said very quietly. "I never had a chance, Joe. I didn't even get a good look around."

He turned and walked toward the door, holding his cap in his hand, and the others watched him as he opened the screen door and let it slam shut behind him.

Cordell looked at McRae. "He's crazy."

"No, he's not, Joe," McRae said. "He's been slapped around a lot and seen most of his friends get killed, but he's not crazy. Ben wants to go back as much as you or I do, but first he wants to see how close he can get to Charlie's back yard." McRae got up from the bench.

"Going back to your tent?" Cordell asked.

"No. Over to Strike Command. I'll let you know what cooks."

Lambert was standing in front of his tent when he saw McRae drive his jeep down the road.

"Where away, Larry?" he shouted.

"Over to Strike. Want a ride?"

"Sure. I'd like to hear what tonight's plans are. Anyway I need the air."

STRIKE COMMAND was the coolest place at Henderson Field. Its walls were thick cement coated with whitewash, and the operations rooms had a bare cement floor. There were maps and charts tacked to the walls and on one side there was an operational blackboard. As reports came in from the control tower the duty sergeant erased some of the little boxes, changing figures or names.

McRae went over and looked at the weather chart.

Lambert saw Paul Scott at the duty officer's desk, a field phone wedged between his shoulder and ear, another phone in his left hand, and a pen in his right. He was taking down a message and Lambert waited until he had hung up the phone.

"Hello, Paul," he said. "Weather look good?"

"It does," McRae answered, turning from the chart behind them.

"How about the strike?" Lambert asked.

"I'm going up to see the commander now." McRae went out of the room to the interior ladder that led up to the briefing shack on the hilltop.

"Has the mail come in yet?" Lambert asked.

"Don't think so, Ben. About an hour."

The phone rang and Paul picked it up. "Strike Command," he said.

When he had rung off he said, "The SBDs are coming back."

"All of them?"

"Don't know yet. Let's count them when they come in."

Lambert followed Scott out of the entrance between the rows of sandbags and put on his dark glasses as the sun hit him. He pulled down the visor of his baseball cap and looked at the east end of the field.

"One," Scott counted.

"How many were there?"

"Ten."

"Two," Lambert said. The first plane was at the far end of Henderson and he could see the puff of dust as the pilot kicked the brakes.

"Three," Scott said. They counted silently until eight had landed.

"There's nine," Ben said. The plane limped in over the edge of the strip, its engine coughing badly. The pilot pancaked her in, and she bounced high, taking the full shock on her landing struts. The engine died and she mushed down the runway, little spurts of dust rising as she skipped along, and slowed when the pilot touched the brakes.

"Where's ten?" Scott said.

"Where do you think?"

"Maybe he'll come in later."

"Don't be a fool, Paul. If he comes back it'll be in a rubber boat. Ten went out and only nine got back. That's a pretty good average, I'd say."

Lambert watched the SBD pilots walk up the hill to the briefing room. Some wore helmets on the back of their heads, but most of them had on wool baseball caps and dark glasses. Their khakis were bleached and greasy, the short-sleeved shirts frayed and torn, but they walked with an air and a swagger, feeling the weight of their

.45s and their sheath knives on their hips—the bloody sunburned wonders of Henderson.

He watched the last one go into the screened veranda and saw McRae edge his way out. The skipper had a sheaf of papers in his hands and he waved them at Lambert as he strode down the hillside toward him.

"Got the dope?" Ben asked.

"I sure have, lad," McRae said, smiling.

"What have they got for us?"

"Kahili tonight," McRae said. "A hell of a big strike."

They walked down to the jeep together and Lambert tasted the dryness of his mouth.

"Do we all go?"

"Yes," McRae said. "Every TBF we can get into the air." He backed the jeep down to the taxi apron and Lambert held on to the metal seat while they bounced over the mat toward the squadron.

Ten O'Clock

They came into a clearing beside Henderson and, looking up at the faint sound of an approaching plane, saw a C-47 cargo plane coming in over Koli Point.

"That would be the mail plane," McRae said.

"I'll get out at Scat Operations," Lambert said. "If there's any mail for the squadron, I'll bring it back."

"No," McRae said. "Easier for me to get a ride back from the revetments. You take the jeep, and drive me over."

Lambert drove onto the taxi mat and let McRae out beside his plane. Then Lambert turned the jeep around and headed down the edge of Henderson to the Southern Combat Air Transport Operations tent. He pulled up in front and watched the converted commercial plane land.

When the engines stopped, the dust died down and the cargo door was swung open. Lambert started his jeep again and drove slowly out on the field, stopping about fifty feet from the plane. The pilot and the co-pilot jumped out and then the radioman. Lambert tried to look inside the fuselage to see if the piles of mail sacks were there, but a figure in an Army flight jacket, with a long-brimmed hat, jumped down to the ground. Ben watched it curiously until he realized suddenly that it was an Army nurse. He noticed the roundness of her body and then, as she turned toward him in the sunlight, he saw it was Ann Robinson.

Lambert pushed back his cap and stood up in the jeep. "Hello, Ann," he said. "How was the trip?"

She ran over to him, her heavy Army shoes scuffing the dirt of the runway. "Ben," she said breathlessly, "I'm so glad you're here."

"I've been here ever since I left Australia," he said. "Where did you think I was?"

"I couldn't know," she said, "and I was afraid to ask. I knew the kind of things your squadron's been doing and I was scared to death. Oh, Ben, I wish you were safe in Noumea or Fiji or back at Pensacola, instructing."

"Well," he said, "I wanted wings. How long will you be here?"

"About half an hour," she said. "We're evacuating some casualties. Is there any place we can be alone until I have to go?"

"Yes," he said. "Get in. We'll find a place." She got in beside him, and he started up toward the Tenaru.

"I've never been this far from Henderson before," she said.

"I hope we'll both be a lot farther away some day," he said. He looked at her and saw how lovely she was with the neck of her jacket open and her hair blowing in the wind. They drove up to the top of a hill overlooking Henderson and he pulled over to the side of the road. Ben turned off the ignition and pulled her to him. His lips found the cool smoothness of her temple.

"Ben darling," she said softly. "When will it be over? I'm so terribly tired."

"I don't know, Ann. Never, maybe."

"Where does that leave us?"

"Where it's always leaving us—a year apart and a moment together."

"Why won't you write?" she asked slowly.

He looked away, over the field, to the green palms on the other side. "Maybe I'm thinking of you," he said. "What if the letters stopped?"

"I couldn't bear it, darling. I couldn't. . . . But I keep thinking about you and wondering if you're still alive and if I'll ever see you again."

"Look, darling," he said quietly. "Don't wonder about me if you can help it. Wherever I am I'm doing the thing I wanted most. It's very simple. You don't worry about what might happen to you—don't worry about me."

"But I can't help it," she said. "Oh, Ben, if it would only stop!" She put her face into the hollow of his shoulder.

"No," he said. "If it stopped today it wouldn't do any good. We haven't killed enough of them yet or burned their cities or bombed them to hell, the way we must. When I put away my wings, I want it to be for good."

"But you've done your part, Ben. You and the others have done more than men have ever been asked to do before."

"This time there's more to be done, Ann. Don't you see? We're good at our job. If we weren't doing it, it might not be done so well."

"Don't you ever feel afraid or tired or sick of it, or want to stop?"

"Of course," he said. "But we've only done a little, and when we get sick of things, all we have to do is remember that morning on Ford Island and the way it was in the afternoon at Midway, and the guys in the squadron who didn't come back."

"When will you get leave?" she asked abruptly, looking away from him.

"I'm not sure. Maybe after this operation's finished."

"When will that be?"

"Tonight's supposed to be the last time."

"When you get leave I'll be in Auckland. Would you like to go to Sydney again?"

"Yes," he said. "Can you get a furlough?"

"I'll try to get a week," she said. "I'm sure I can."

They sat for a long time without saying anything, feeling the light wind from the sea and hearing the distant noises of Henderson. He held her and she tilted her chin to be kissed without opening her eyes.

She moved her arm, and her wrist fell against the steering wheel. Her wrist watch clicked against the painted metal.

"It's ten forty-five," she said, "We ought to go back."

When they drove out on the field, they could see ambulances beside the plane. Hospital corpsmen were carrying the stretchers inside. Lambert stopped the jeep near one of the ambulances.

"Back to work now," she said. "This won't be much fun for you."

Her little laugh made his heart catch in his throat and he watched her tuck up her hair and put on the dusty cap. He knew that he would always remember her that way and that for him she could never be more beautiful.

He watched her as she climbed into the plane and then he sat there for a long time watching the plane until it turned into the sun and he had to look away. After a while he turned the jeep around and headed back toward the revetment area.

He saw Forsyth standing by his plane, his hands on his hips, looking expectantly at him.

"Hello there," Eliot said.

"Hi," Ben said, driving up to him.

"Any mail?" he asked.

"Mail?" Lambert said. "What mail?"

Afternoon

Twelve O'Clock

McRae opened the door of the mess hall and saw that it was almost filled with officers. He put his gloves into the hip pocket of his shorts and walked to his table at the end of the room. The others at the table were already eating when he got there.

"Commander Knucklehead, I presume," Cordell said.

"Hello, Joe," McRae said. He swallowed an atabrine pill, and poured himself another cup of water. "Is there any salt for the eggs?" he asked. He looked at the brown putty-thick mass on his plate.

"No salt today," one of the officers said, "and no pepper and no bananas."

McRae poured a cup of coffee from the heavy china pitcher. "I'll try to wash them down," he said. "If there was only some way to make them tasteless."

Cordell said, "I suppose it's time to start riding the mess treasurer again."

"It's not his fault," McRae said.

"Whose fault is it, Larry?"

"I don't know. It's like so many other things. Something's wrong and nobody ever knows why or who's to blame. If there was any food on the island, we'd all get a share."

The flight surgeon came over to McRae's table. "Hello, Larry," he said. "Rotten lunch, wasn't it?"

"Sit down, doc," McRae said. "What's on your mind?"

"I want Burns grounded for a while," the doctor said. "He's had the shakes ever since that last strike. If I can keep him out of the air for a while, there's a chance he may fly again. Right now he couldn't drive a kiddy-car."

"Whatever you say, Tom," McRae said. "Anything special to blame?"

"I don't think so," the flight surgeon said. "He's just had too much of it for a while."

"What if the shakes don't stop?"

"He'll have to have leave," the doctor said. "Maybe a week in Auckland."

"That would fix up anybody," Cordell said. "Look how my hand trembles. I can hardly light a cigarette."

"Or pull a cork," the doctor said. "You're just hung over."

"How about a hop up the Slot tonight, doc?" Cordell said. "We'll take a look at *your* hands in the morning."

"No, thanks." The doctor grinned. "I have to be here to take care of whoever gets back."

"If any," Cordell said.

"Yes," the doctor said, "if any."

McRae looked around the mess hall and saw that some of his pilots were starting to leave. He rapped sharply on the coffee pitcher with his spoon and the mess hall became quiet as the men stopped talking. The squadron commander stood up.

"I have a brief message for the gentlemen of VTB Eleven," he said. The SBD pilots turned away.

"As you may have heard, there will be a strike at Kahili tonight, weather permitting. Strike briefing will be at four this afternoon. I advise you to get as much sleep as you can before tonight's operation, but don't sleep through the briefing. It's particularly important today. Thank you." He seated himself and felt for a cigarette.

Babe Lewis came up to McRae. "Sir," he said, "I'd like to go up Kokumbona for some souvenirs this afternoon."

"Go ahead," McRae said. "Be sure you're over at Strike Command by four."

Paul Scott walked over to him. "Commander," he said, "it looks like Charlie will be over about three o'clock. Will your planes be dispersed then?"

"Yes," McRae said. "They'll be in their revetments."

"The fighters should be able to intercept over Russell," Scott said. "I thought you'd like to know."

"Thanks," McRae said. "I'm usually the last to hear."

Two O'Clock

Lambert felt somebody pushing his shoulder and he opened his eyes. It was Scott standing beside his cot.

"Wake up, Ben," he said. "This is a big afternoon."

Lambert sat up. "What's happening?"

"Charlie's coming down the Slot," Paul said.

"What of it? I want to sleep."

"You're out of luck. They'll be sounding Condition Red. The fighters are gassing up now."

"Where're you going?"

"Over to Strike," Paul said. "You better come, too. Enjoy life at its best."

Three O'Clock

Henderson looked deserted. Lambert sat on the hill by a row of sandbags outside Strike Command, watching the big white clouds that formed a background for the jungle. Five Corsairs orbited lazily overhead. The loud-speaker buzzed harshly inside the operations room, its sounds carrying out to where he sat.

Some P-40s flew low over the palms toward Lunga Point and he knew that they were waiting for Charlie's torpedo planes to come into the channel. A fighter squadron taxied out to the end of Henderson, ready to take off and meet the one it was relieving. Then the first one would gas up again and stand by to go upstairs. It was tough luck if you were strafed on the ground or the runway was bombed while you were taking off.

Then, far away, over the tip of Cape Esperance, he could see the P-38s streaking to the west and he heard the loud-speaker inside:

"Intercepting Bogies at eighteen thousand. Intercepting Bogies at eighteen thousand. Coming yourwards. Coming yourwards. About twenty-five of them."

The first flight of Bogies looked like little white pin points against the blue sky as they flew toward Henderson.

The first Lightning made a pass at the formation and pulled away. The others followed in turn and then he saw a little puff of smoke, like flak, dropping from the group of bombers. It fell away and streamed down toward the sea.

The loud-speaker spoke. *"Scratch one Bogie,"* it said.

He knew that if they got much closer, the fighters would have to break away and let the ack-ack try to stop them. The 38s circled over their target and then winged over, one by one. This time he saw three puffs of smoke drop out of the formation, and one exploded into a blob of orange flame. One Lightning fell slowly, like a brown autumn leaf, toward the channel.

"Three Bogies minus," the loud-speaker said. *"Lieutenant Weber just crashed into the sea."*

The Lightnings were jockeying for position, flying in an open echelon of Vs as they overtook the bombers. There were eight Mitsubishis left in the flight, and the Lightnings were above them now, readying for their last pass before the planes reached Henderson.

He could hear the whine of the interceptors as they drove on the oncoming bombers, and this time he saw one Mitsubishi explode in a blast of debris and two more start to spin down toward the jungle. As the last Lightning finished its run, a fourth bomber caught fire and flew along, still in formation, its flames trickling out behind it, until the tail had burned away and it began a slow spin toward the earth.

The remaining four dived steeply and the Lightnings formed up again below them and started to climb. But the bombers were in line with Henderson now and Lambert knew that they would loose their eggs in just a moment.

He leaned back against the side of the hill as the four white planes came on, and then he heard the eerie whistle of the first bombs as they dropped from the open bays. As they fell he turned over on his stomach and put his hands over the back of his neck and buried his face in the grass. The explosions came far away as the first string hit near the edge of the jungle; and the others came nearer, until it sounded as though somebody were pounding irregularly on a tremendous metal drum. He waited for a moment until the rocks had stopped falling. Then he rolled over, shielding his eyes with one hand, and looked up at the sky. The bombers were going away, climbing as they turned. The Lightnings followed them out to sea.

There were a few holes on the runway and a big one on the taxi mat at the far side. At the edge of the jungle a B-17 burned briskly. He could hear the crackling roar as the flames shot up toward the palms.

"Bogies dispersed," the loud-speaker crackled.

Ben took off his helmet and lay back on the hill watching the clear blue sky above. After a while he saw Scott walk out of the sandbagged doorway and stand smoking a cigarette.

"What's the story?" Ben asked. "How many'd we get?"

"About thirty," Scott said. "We won't know until all the fighter pilots have been questioned. They didn't do much damage to the runway, did they?"

"No," Lambert said. "Sounds like a good afternoon's work. I don't think we've got any complaints. How many planes did we lose?"

"Seven, I think," Scott said.

"This is a bad day for Charlie." Lambert lighted a cigarette.

"He might have knocked off our cruisers out there."

"He didn't, though. After a while he'll learn that we're boss around here. From now on the fleet can do pretty much what it wants. Now the fleet can work beyond the limit of darkness," Ben said.

"What's that?" Scott asked.

"It's an old fleet doctrine that the striking radius of a task force is limited by the hours of darkness," Ben said.

"I see," Scott said. "Get out of Charlie's range by daylight."

"That's it. Before air power counted for much, they used to figure that in eight hours of darkness a task force could head toward the enemy for four hours before having to turn around and steam back."

"And it's different now."

"Yes," Lambert said. "Now that the cruisers can have air cover from Henderson, they can go a lot farther. The fighters give them protection."

"What it amounts to, then, is that the limit of darkness is pushed back to the limit of our own air cover."

"Right," Ben said. "That's why we're here—to keep pushing it back."

"I never thought of it that way," Scott said.

Four O'Clock

The officers of Torpedo Eleven climbed out of the recon cars that had brought them over to Strike Command. They wore dark glasses and some of them had on G. I. field hats with the soft brims raked down in front.

Lambert saw McRae come in with Cordell. He watched for Forsyth and finally saw him come in with four others. The officers talked and smoked and drew little sketches on the blackboard or stood around looking at the green bas-relief of Kahili. One of the junior officers passed around paper and pencils.

Babe opened the door and came into the room. Lambert noticed that he looked haggard. His face was streaked with dirt, but Ben could see that he had taken time to put on a washed shirt.

Babe crossed the front of the room and sat down beside Lambert.

"You just made it," Lambert said. "How was the trip?"

Babe wiped the sweat from his forehead. "Terrible."

"How far'd you go?"

"Top of Kokumbona," Babe said. "I'm worn out."

"Any snipers?"

"Yes," Babe said. "Three of them. Along the river a machine gun started shooting at us."

"Anybody hurt?"

"No," Babe said. "We were just lucky. We ducked back into the underbrush. There was a big cave up on the other side of the river bank. One of the marines threw some rocks into the river ahead of us and they started shooting again from the cave. As soon as we knew where they were, a Marine lieutenant heaved up two grenades."

"Any more trouble?"

"No," Babe said. "They were dead when we climbed up. I got a flag and a Luger. Then we heard the bombs dropping here and started back."

The officer who was passing out paper gave some to Babe, and Lambert handed him a pencil. Then the door opened and Lieutenant Colonel Sampson came in. He was the staff intelligence officer.

"At ease, gentlemen," he said, when they started to rise. He walked over to the blackboard and with a few strokes drew a rough outline of the Kahili-Buin area.

"Gentlemen," he said, "as you probably know, the strike tonight will be at Kahili. The detailed plans will be given you tonight before you take off. I'll give you the general scheme now so that you can be thinking about it before the final briefing.

"Take-off time is scheduled for a half hour after midnight—zero-zero thirty. The Army is sending as many heavy bombers as they can—probably about twenty. They'll bomb the defense area around the harbor and try to knock out the ack-ack and searchlight installations before you gentlemen arrive. Is that right, captain?"

An Army captain in the back of the room stood up. "That's right, sir," he said. "The way it looks now, we'll only have about fifteen planes for you. Charlie kicked us around a little this afternoon."

The Navy flyers chuckled appreciatively.

Sampson turned to the blackboard. "You'll go up the Slot as usual until you get to Bougainville Strait. We're planning on thirty-five TBFs for the strike. Twenty will carry mines; ten, torpedoes; and five, a two-thousand-pounder each. All planes except the five carrying bombs will fly over Bougainville Strait and then turn west here." He made an X on the board. "You'll swing around southwest until you see the pass north of Kahili. Then, from two thousand feet, you'll start figuring your approach to the harbor. Charlie won't be expecting you to come in from the north and the surprise should be worth a few seconds to you."

"How about the planes with eggs?" an officer asked. He sketched lazily on his notepaper.

"They'll orbit just south of Fauro," Sampson said, "for approximately eight minutes."

Babe wrote, "eight minutes" and underlined the words.

"By that time Charlie should be looking for you with his searchlights." He leaned back against the table. "That's where the plunge-bombing comes in. You lads with bombs will be at eighteen hundred feet, waiting for the searchlights. When Charlie snaps them on, *you* put them out. We don't want him to see where the mines are laid."

"How much shipping is there off Buin?" an officer asked.

"One large attack-cargo ship, a small supply ship, and three barges," Sampson said. "Let's get them if we can. When the mining's finished, the planes with fish can go in for a try at them.

"When it's over," Sampson continued, "form up if you can, and fly back in formation. It'll be easier to count noses that way. If you get lost or hurt, or your compass is shot out, go up to five thousand and look around for flares. Is that right, Mr. Vaughan?"

A New Zealand flight lieutenant stood up. "Right, sir," he said. "We'll be flying at five thousand, dropping parachute flares every five minutes. If you don't know which way to fly, just follow the flares and you'll be back for breakfast."

"Thank you, Mr. Vaughan," the colonel smiled. He fumbled inside his shirt pocket and brought out a sheet of paper. He unfolded it and looked around the room. "I have the list of your strike assignments," he said. "The first twenty officers will carry mines in their bays: *Harking . . . Thompson . . . Graham . . . Cordell . . . Evans . . Wilkinson . . . Lovering . . . Harrison.*" He finished the list.

"The next group will have torpedoes: *Weatherall . . . Lewis . . . Forsyth . . . Ashford . . . Soresi . . . Flynn . . . McRae . . .*"

Babe looked at the flies buzzing against the screened side of the room. Tonight he would carry a fish.

Forsyth drew a picture of a huge torpedo.

"Just my luck," Cordell said to Forsyth. "Want to trade?"

"No, thanks," Eliot said. "I like it fine."

Lambert put down his pencil and folded his notepaper. Plunge-bombing would be all right for a change.

"That leaves five for the eggs," Sampson said. "*Williams . . . French . . . Brown . . . Lambert . . .* and *McIntyre.*" He put the list back into his pocket and buttoned it. "If you'll come up to the map, I'll show you where everything is."

Night

Eight O'Clock

Cordell had been typing a letter on his battered portable. He pulled it out and looked at it, wishing that he could tell his wife more of what his life was really like, but there was no sense in having the letter cut up by the censors. It would only worry her. He read it again.

My darling:

Things have been pretty much the same since I wrote you last. We didn't fly last night, but we're going up to Kahili tonight and finish the job we started. I think we may get leave soon and, of course, it's possible that the squadron may be relieved. If we get sent back, I'll put in for instructing duty at Corpus Christi or Jacksonville. It's been so long since we've been together that I think we deserve some time for ourselves.

I'm glad to hear that little Joe is doing so well at school. It's hard to believe that he's finishing second grade. I hope this summer that maybe you'll be able to go away somewhere for a rest.

I haven't heard anything more about my promotion, but we'd be the last ones to hear about any new selection lists. Anyway, I'm due for the next half-stripe in a few weeks and the promotion will be retroactive, including the extra pay and allowances.

We had a big raid this afternoon, but they didn't do much damage. I got into the dugout as soon as I heard Condition Red, so I didn't see much of what was happening. We shot down a lot of planes and I guess it'll be a long time before Charlie tries it again.

Give little Joe a hug for me and tell him not to forget his dad.

All of my love to you, my dearest—

Your husband

He folded the letter in thirds, put an air-mail stamp on the envelope, and then slipped the folded letter inside and sealed the sticky flap, wondering whether he should have told her about the chill the other night. No. It would just worry her.

He began to feel a little cold and got up and went over to his sea chest and dug around until he found his light summer flying jacket. He put it on and went back to the table. But he was feeling colder in spite of the jacket, and he put his typewriter back into its frayed case and carried it over by the sea chest. His knees felt weak as he walked. Then, while he was watching the shadows form and melt, his breath began to come faster and his throat felt tight and he knew that the chill was coming. He opened the first-aid case and took out the little brown bottle of atabrine. He took two grain-and-a-half pills. He felt cold all over now. Sitting on the cot he fought against the chill as it came over him.

Cordell stretched out on his cot, feeling his forehead grow hot with sweat as he listened to the drone of the mosquitoes under the netting. He lay there for a moment, hoping he would not throw up, and heard the sudden patter of rats running across the floor. His legs began to shake, and he raised up and pulled the blanket over him.

His teeth began to chatter and he drew the blanket closely around his neck to keep in as much body heat as possible. Then he began to tremble from his ankles to his shoulders. He held his feet together and tried to stop the chill, but it increased until he could hear the cot creaking. He clasped his hands, holding them tightly so that his arms would not shake so hard. The hot rancid perspiration began to come from his pores and it rolled down the side of his face and came from his neck and his back and his chest and his loins, but the chill was reaching deeper, and he felt his head begin to throb, and he tensed his jaw muscles, trying to stop the chattering of his teeth, but after a while he was too tired to fight it any longer and he hugged the blanket around him closely and felt his pillow soak up the sweat from his face and neck.

When the chill stopped, he dozed off for a few minutes and then woke, feeling sick and weak. He pulled the blanket down around his shoulders. The sweat on his face was turning cold as it evaporated, and his muscles ached from their involuntary spasms. He knew that the atabrine was working now and that it should hold him until morning. He'd have to wear all the clothes he could find tonight if he wanted to avoid another chill during the strike. It wouldn't be so bad if they didn't fly higher than 8,000.

He lifted the mosquito netting over his head and got to his feet slowly, feeling as though he had just climbed out of a swimming pool after a race. There were several dusty blankets piled in the corner and he knelt down unsteadily, looking for the one that was least moldy. He straightened up and unfolded a blanket and shook it a little. It smelled old and stale, but he carried it over to his cot and threw it lengthwise under the netting.

Then he sat up on the cot with the flashlight between his legs while he tucked the netting under the mattress. When he had finished he turned the pillow and pulled the blanket over him. He snapped off the flashlight and put it under his pillow and lay in the dark.

Nine O'Clock

Eliot Forsyth read his mother's letter under the dim light of the single bulb. His mother and father were well, the letter said. His sister was going to have her second baby in the fall, and his brother wanted to leave Andover and join the Marines. He hoped that Jack would go back to Andover for his last year. If he got that in, maybe the war would be over and he could go ahead to college. Anyway the chances would be better of his going to college after the war.

Forsyth tilted back his cap and propped his elbows on the table and thought of his own years at college.

He remembered the first Christmas vacation when he had been back at Stamford and gone to all the parties. There was a lot of good champagne and name bands, but the girls who were on the marriage block danced with the seniors and juniors and talked about Dobbs and Ethel Walker, and that spring a lot of engagements had been announced and he went down to Block Island for the summer and worked as a lifeguard.

Junior summer he had gone abroad. The boat sailed early in June, and he had gone home for three days before he went down to New York to meet the other guys. They had spent a night in Manhattan, and in the morning they took a taxi over to Hoboken and got aboard.

They ate at second sitting, and he remembered watching the girl between her father and mother, and Bud Converse said, *"Some one you know?"* and he said, *"Yes, but I don't know her name."* And he sat there watching her until she got up to leave, and after a while he had gone to the ballroom looking for her, but she was not there. In the morning, when he walked around deck, he had looked for her again and had not found her until the afternoon, when he walked past the ping-pong table. A ball had bounced down on the deck and he brought it out of the scuppers and gave it back to her, and the girl she was playing with went away and they stood there without saying anything until the steward came up to them with the tea cart, and they sat next to each other in deck chairs and ate little frosted cakes and drank tea, and then she said, *"My name's Linda Chapin. Hello."* And he said, *"I'm Eliot Forsyth."* And she told him she was from Winnetka, and after a while they got up and played ping-pong, but he couldn't keep his mind on the game because he wanted to tell her that he'd been looking for her for a lifetime and now he'd found her; couldn't they just talk?

As he sat alone in his tent near Henderson Field he thought of her laugh, as light as her first kiss that night after the dance when they sat on the boat deck in the mists of the Atlantic. All of the nights afterward they had gone there until the ship docked. That morning, sitting beside him in a deck chair, she told him that she loved him and he saw the tears in her eyes and he knew it had happened the way he had known it would all his life, and later in London there had been Simpson's and the Savoy and cocktails at the Grosvenor House with her mother and father, and then they had gone to Paris and had brandy and croissants on Sunday morning under the trees at the de la Paix, and then at Lorry Park in Copenhagen there had been the open-air café in the evening, with the blue and red balloons in the trees. His money had begun to go, so that when they went back to London he had to travel third class. He remembered getting on the train at the Gare du Nord and buying bread and warm champagne at the stops on the way to Boulogne, and when they got on the Channel steamer she stood out on the deck with him in the rain until they docked at Folkestone, and he went to the Russell Square and they met at the Grosvenor House every day.

ONE night, when they walked through Hyde Park, the barrage balloons were up and sirens wailed and the lights went out everywhere, and he thought of how they had stood under the trees looking up at the silver-gray barrage balloons only three days before the war, when they were very much in love.

He knew that he could never again be as happy as he had been on the homeward crossing. The ship was dark, but that made it easier for them to be alone, and every night the band played a beautiful arrangement of On the Alamo and they always danced together and sat at a little table at the edge of the floor and talked about getting married in the spring.

It brought a lump to his throat now that he was thinking about it again, but, since he had started, he wanted to think it through and then try to forget it for a while.

In quarantine, off New York, they had sat together on a hatch cover and watched the lights of the city all through that last night. The tugboats in the harbor passed by and in the full moon she had turned her lips to him and he knew that she wanted him, but he had said, "Not just for tonight, darling. I want it to be for always," and she had said nothing, and later they walked around the boat deck together for the last time and kissed good night by the salon.

Forsyth remembered sitting on his baggage at customs, and seeing the guy from Oak Park meet her. She had noticed and had come over to say not to be silly; he was only a boy she had grown up with, that she *had* to be nice to; she was going to marry you. And you kissed her good-by, away from her parents, and she wrote you every day for a while; but then, when she was ready for her coming-out party, you couldn't get there because of a political science exam that meant a lot toward getting into Harvard Law.

The only picture he ever had of her had gone down on the Hornet. It was very sweet and restrained, but he had noticed the suggestion of hardness around her mouth.

He did not see her until next summer, in Newport, after graduation, and they had sat in his car, and she had told him and he remembered the sound of her voice, and for the first time the pain had come around his heart and he had looked away and driven her back.

Now, as he sat under the staring light, he thought of the softness of her mouth when she had kissed him that last time and left before his tears had come, and he turned and looked beyond the walls of his tent into the night. I remember, darling, he thought. I'll always remember. . . .

Ten O'Clock

Babe came into the tent and saw Forsyth sitting alone.

"Hello," he said. "Back from the movie. Did you write any letters?"

"No," Forsyth said. "I didn't get around to it."

"How are your folks?" Babe asked.

"Good," Eliot said. "I think they've finally stopped worrying about me. They figure it's safer here than on the Hornet. Maybe they're right."

"Will I ever get carrier duty?" Babe asked.

"Probably, but not for a while. We'll finish our tour of duty here and go back to the States. Some of us will get duty instructing and the skipper may go to a carrier as air officer. They might build a squadron around Lambert."

"But he's not very old."

"No," Eliot said, "but he grew up fast. The only things he takes seriously are killing Japs and flying. Out here he can combine the two. He doesn't worry about anything else."

"I wish I could be like that," Babe said.

"It's a good way to be. The reason he's a good flyer is that there isn't anything else on his mind. When he came to the Pacific he left nothing behind."

Eliot took off his shoes and got under the netting. He tucked the netting underneath the mattress and lay back on the pillow.

Babe watched Forsyth lying under the shadow of his netting and when he heard him breathing regularly he went over to the table and sat down. The letters from Marge were still in his pocket. Each had said almost the same thing. She missed him . . . when was he coming home . . . an allotment check had been four days late and she had begun to worry . . . she was lonesome without him . . . some of the other wives were going out with other men but she never would . . . it had been a mistake about the baby and anyway she would have been afraid unless he could be there when it was born. He felt a little empty. For a while he had thought of himself as a father and it made him feel older and more confident, but now that was gone and he wondered if he wouldn't be better off if he hadn't married. The other guys seemed to get along all right—like Lambert and the skipper and Forsyth.

He thought of the torpedo inside the bomb bay of his plane and wondered if he would get a ship tonight.

He took Marge's letters from his pocket and put them on the table. Tomorrow he would read them again. A chute opens in two seconds, he remembered. Nobody expects you to risk your life to save your plane. Open the cockpit hood, unfasten your safety belt, look at your ripcord, go over the side head first—toward the inside of a spin—keep your legs straight before pulling the ripcord. Check oscillation by pulling down on the rising side of the chute. Pull the shrouds in the direction you want to go. Release the harness before hitting the water, then inflate your life jacket. That was how you did it. But if he could, he would always try to bring the plane down because of the crew. . . .

Eleven O'Clock

"Here's mine, Ben," one of the SBD pilots said.

"Thanks, Jake," Lambert said. He stuck the bills in his pocket with the rest of his winnings.

They were standing around a pair of tables that had been pushed together in the center of the tent floor. Poker chips were scattered on the top of the table and one of the younger pilots gathered them up.

"How much'd you take, Ben?" somebody asked.

"Something over two hundred," he said.

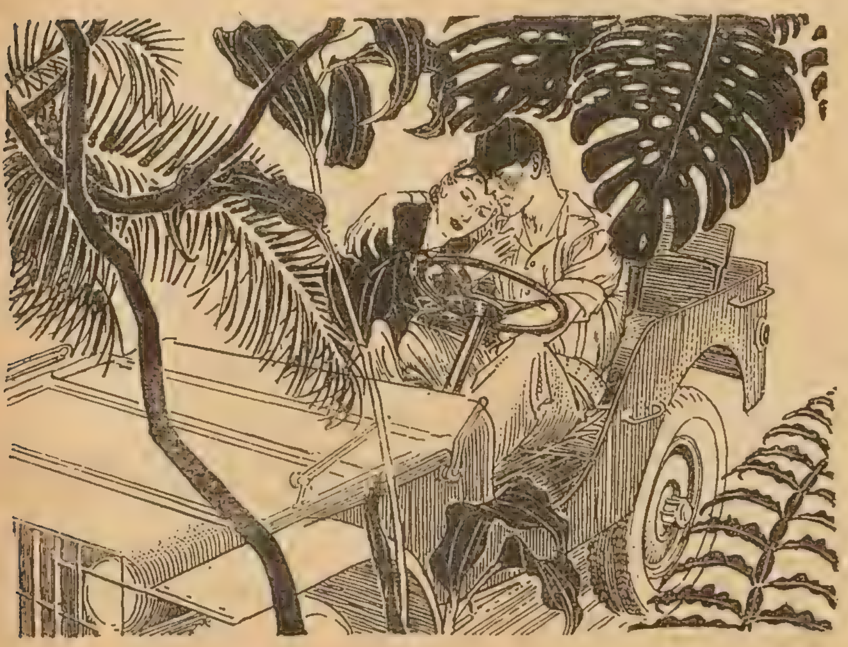
The pilot groaned. "We hate to let you go," he said.

Ben laughed. "The war won't wait," he said. "I'm flying tonight."

Outside he took the flashlight from his belt, and, shining it on the grass, walked to the jeep. He got in and turned on the headlights. He could hear them inside the tent, talking about the hands they had held. Ben turned the jeep out to the road and started slowly back toward the squadron. He dimmed the lights as he drove up to his tent and turned off the ignition, coasting the rest of the way. He turned off the lights and sat looking at the moon over the tops of the palms. It had been full last night, but tonight it was still almost perfect, and he knew that it would be bright over Kahili.

He could see the steps in the moonlight and he opened the door quietly and went into the tent.

He looked around the darkened tent at the things that were his. Not a hell of a lot to show for twenty-three years, he thought—an empty Burgundy bottle, a sea chest full of old khakis and skivvies. Some old letters wrapped with a piece of cord, an ash tray from the Lex.



The first time they had let him out of sick bay after the Lex he had gone up to the wardroom for dinner. The others were quiet when he sat down alone at the table that had been his squadron's. It was hard to eat that night, sitting by yourself, looking at the long table and the empty chairs around it, seeing the other tables in the wardroom with only a few missing here and there.

He remembered flying East from the Mare Island Hospital for ten days' sick leave. The first few days, when he stayed with his mother and father, he slept most of the time and kept away from people who came to see him. Then he had taken the train to Boston and gone down to the Cape to stay at their old place. It was the end of summer then and most of the people had gone back. He had walked down from the beach club and stretched out on the sand and let the sun reach his scars. After a while he had gone in and swum out to the point and rested on a rock with the spray blowing over him. From there you could see the people coming down to the beach with their chairs and towels and beach mats and big straw hats, and he had watched them until it was time to go back and have lunch with his brother.

Jeff had sat with him on the porch, looking out over the rocks, watching the people he did not know walk past, but it was hard to talk to Jeff because he still lived in the world you had moved away from and begun to forget. So after a while, you went down to the beach alone and walked behind the dunes, through the wild sea grass that waved in the offshore breeze.

As you walked along the sand, you saw her lying on a blanket with her mother and father and there was a baby beside her. But before you had made up your mind, Mr. Anderson had seen you and stood up and waved to you to come over and you had felt the tightness in your stomach again, the way you always did when you saw her. She had seen you before you reached them and sat up, holding her suit top because the straps were down, and she had smiled at you and said, *"Hello, Ben. It's been so long since I've seen you."* And her father had shaken hands with you and her mother had taken off her dark glasses and said how much thinner you were and the baby on the blanket crawled toward the sand and Diana had reached out and brought it back and her skin had never been so tanned before, but the baby looked white and had blond hair, and they said they'd missed you last summer and you said that you'd missed being back and her mother said my, but a lot of things must have happened to you, and Diana asked you how long you'd been back and you said just since last evening. Mr. Anderson said it seemed funny this summer not to see you and Din going over to the hotel together for the dances the way you always had, and you looked at her baby and began to hate it because it was not part of you the way it should have been, and Diana said it was too bad you hadn't come sooner because they were leaving at five to go back home, and the baby began to cry and Mrs. Anderson sat up and said she thought she'd had enough sun for the summer and anyway the baby ought to have its nap, and she gathered up her things and lifted the baby and walked down the beach and Mr. Anderson looked at you and asked you to drop around and have a drink for old times' sake.

Ben remembered sitting there beside the girl he had loved all the summers of his life, while she slid the straps over her shoulders and put the top back on the bottle of lotion. Then she had asked what the matter was and there was nothing to say, so she asked you about the Lex going down and there was nothing you wanted to say, and you looked at her lovely face and the golden brown hair falling down over her shoulders and finally you asked her if she was happy and she said she was worried that Roger might be drafted and she had been thinking about writing you and asking you to help him get a commission—his eyes weren't very strong—so maybe he could get into the Supply Corps or whatever it was. But she didn't look at you when she spoke, and the bitterness that had been in your heart so long burst out and you told her that you didn't give a goddamn what happened to Roger and if he'd gone in when you had, he wouldn't have been hanging around to marry her the first summer you were away. You could see that she was frightened because she had said the wrong thing and you wanted to hate her, the way you hated her baby, but now that you were with her nothing remained of the hate you had tried to create while you were away.

You saw the little sailboat turning out toward sea and thought of the afternoons when her father had sat in his bedroom getting drunk with you and saying he'd be damned glad to see you in the family, and you felt her hand on your arm and when you looked in her eyes it was the same way she had looked when you danced together, but you knew that her life was patterned now, and she had been trapped, and she talked to you unsteadily and said it had been her mother who had never liked you because you were too much like her father, and you got to your feet and looked at her and said *"Good-by, sweetheart,"* very softly and turned to go down the beach and she was crying a little as you walked away past the beach umbrellas and the people you did not know. . . .

Ben heard somebody knock at the door. He got up from the table and opened it. It was the orderly from Strike Command.

"It's time, Mr. Lambert," he said.

"Thank you," Ben said. "I'll wake Mr. Cordell."

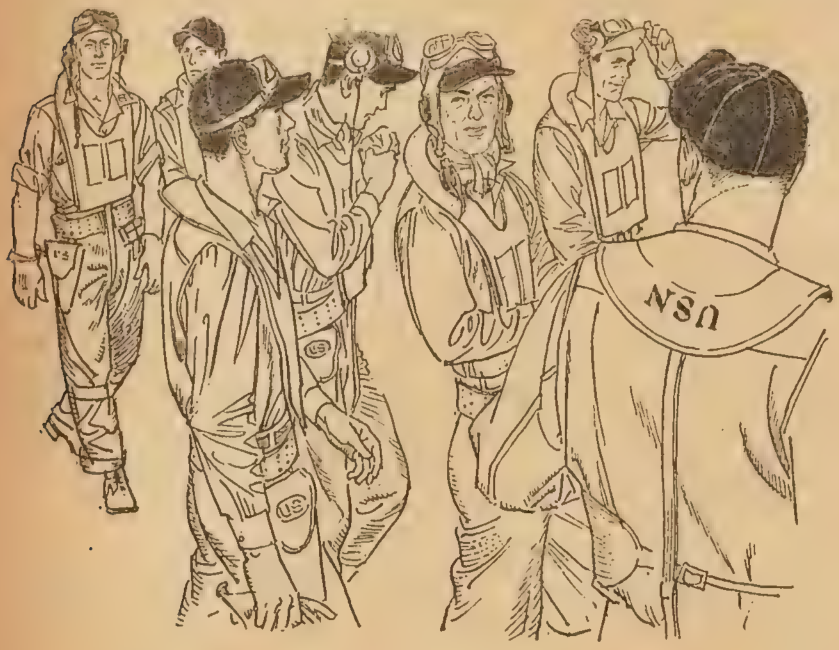
Twelve O'Clock

Driving over the rough road, Cordell and Lambert saw the cluster of lights around the weather shack and they drove up the side of the hill and stopped. They saw the others inside, getting out their nav boards and talking with the weather sergeant. There were benches around the room, and at one end a large drafting table where the weather charts were drawn.

The officers seated themselves and lighted cigarettes and talked until the weather sergeant stepped to the center of the floor.

"Gentlemen," he said, "if you'll give me your attention, I have a few things of interest to you."

They stopped talking and took notepaper from their map pockets and prepared to write against the hard transparent surface of the nav boards across their knees.



"Your altitude will be eight thousand feet until just before the attack, so this dope holds good for that altitude. Excellent visibility with scattered clouds below you at forty-five hundred. The wind will be from zero-eight-oh at eighteen knots. This'll give you a break on the way up. Coming back at five thousand there'll be moderate visibility with light cloud formations as far as Russell."

"How about the Army?" one of the pilots asked.

"They've been briefed. They ought to be taking off any minute."

As he spoke, they heard the grinding roar of a bomber's engines as the first one started down the runway.

The sergeant continued. "You know the homing dope. The flares will be dropped from five thousand feet every five minutes, and your radiomen can call the field on the regular liaison channel if you're lost or in trouble. If you don't know where Henderson is, or your gas is low, give us a call on Liaison and we'll send out a guide plane for you, or you can try to land at Russell. That's all, gentlemen. Good luck."

McRae nodded at the sergeant and took the center of the floor. "It looks like a good night," he said calmly. "Course will be two-nine-three and speed as usual. The tail wind will give us a break on gas, but don't figure it too closely. If something happens so that we can't go in, the mine-carrying planes will return at once. Planes with torpedoes will go to Rekata Bay in case they've got some barges offshore. The five planes with bombs will dump them on the runway at Vila. Here are target maps for each of you, so pass them around and get familiar with them. See you all at breakfast."

The field telephone rang and the sergeant answered it. He turned to McRae. "Condition Red, sir." He turned off the light over his drawing table. "Lights out, gentlemen," he said. "Let's hope Charlie doesn't stay long."

"We'd better get near a foxhole, Babe." Lambert got up and they followed the others outside and saw that the searchlights were already picketing the western end of Henderson. There was a slit trench on the other side of the road. They sat on the ground and let their legs dangle into the slit trench.

Lambert saw that the searchlights were converging. The rays fixed themselves in a huge flexible triangle whose apex moved searchingly across the sky. Then they heard the first burst of ack-ack and the other guns began firing and there were streams of tracers pouring up from the darkness and shells that burst like rockets above the lights and they could see the first bomber in the lights, and two more above it, and there was a burst that seemed to be in the middle of them, but the planes came on and suddenly the firing had stopped and they could hear the hum of the planes coming toward them out of the night. But above them there was a high-pitched whine that knifed down out of the sky and a brief burst of tracers stabbed in the side of the first Bogie. Flames seared through it, and then there was another fleck of orange light as the second burst hit it and the plane blew up in the searchlights.

The lights had lost the two other bombers and a string of bombs burst somewhere in the distance. The triangle changed into separately seeking fingers that found a cloud here and there in the sky, but the bombers had turned and gone and for a moment the lights waved wildly through the sky and died away and there was only the sky and the moonlight.

A light went on inside the shack and Lambert could hear McRae's voice.

"Condition Green. Let's go." The lights of his jeep went on and his engine started and the jeep pulled away and rumbled down the hill toward the road that led to revetments.

"O. K.," Ben said. "Let's get going."

Ahead of them, in a perfect double chain, the jeep lights darted along. The first one turned off the road and the others followed, each going to a different plane. Lambert could see his plane ahead in the moonlight, its engine idling and the prop turning over slowly.

The plane captain ducked under the wing, his flashlight shining on the taxi mat. "Evening, Mr. Lambert," he said.

"Hello, chief," Ben said. "How does she look?"

"Perfect, sir. Ready to go."

"Might as well taxi out," Ben said. "We're late now."

He got into the cockpit and wedged his way into the seat. He could see four planes ahead of him going down the taxi mat. The landing lights of the planes on each side of the mat were blinding and he looked down at his instrument panel. He pulled the phone from the panel and switched to Liaison: *"Tower from Flint,"* he called. *"Tower from Flint."* He pushed the throttle forward, to close up with the plane ahead. *"Flint from Tower,"* his earphones said. *"Flint from Tower. We are receiving you well. Modulation good. Acknowledge."*

Ben pressed the speaking button. *"Roger,"* he said. *"Roger."*

The plane ahead turned off the alley onto the taxi mat that ran parallel with the runway. Ben pushed the throttle ahead and turned to the left and the big plane rumbled up on the taxi strip and he felt the tail wheel bouncing the plane a little. His plane moved slowly, following the other, and then he braked it while the other roared into full throttle and shook under the terrific power of its engine.

The plane ahead rolled down the runway in a swirl of dust, gathering speed, and Ben looked down the dark aisle between the flickering beads of light and pushed the throttle all the way forward.

"Flint from Tower. Flint from Tower. Go ahead. Go ahead."

Ben picked up the phone. *"Wilco,"* he said evenly. *"Wilco."*

Then, with his controls neutral, he released the brakes and felt the first slow bumping as the wheels rolled over the uneven surface of the mat. The plane accelerated quickly and the flare pots on either side of the dark aisle blurred into a dim chain, and he brought the tail up a little, and then, as he felt the wings begin to take the weight, he pulled the stick lightly and the wheels left the ground.

He held the stick back with his left hand and, picking up the phone, spoke to the tower.

"Airborne," he said. *"Airborne."*

One O'Clock

At 400 feet Lambert pulled on his chute straps and fastened the safety belt. The plane was climbing steadily, and he could see the others ahead of him in the moonlight.

He pulled down his goggles and slid back the hood. The cool air rushed into the cockpit, tearing at his thin helmet, beating against his wrists where the gloves were rolled down. He looked over the side and saw the dark end of Cape Esperance. Waves broke whitely on the thin line of the beach.

Beneath him the hulks of the Quincy, the Vincennes, the Astoria, and the Canberra rotted on the floor of Iron Bottom Bay, but when he looked down, the surface of the water looked at rest. The planes ahead bore to the left and he pushed the pedal a little and followed them. He looked up at the compass, and when they straightened out, he saw that they were paralleling the course again. His earphones crackled and he heard McRae talking.

"Knucklehead to Strike. Knucklehead to Strike. Form up, stragglers."

He looked ahead and saw McRae's plane two miles beyond him at the point of spearhead that was formed by the echelon of Vs. Back of him the last few planes closed to the proper interval. The altimeter indicated 4,500 feet, and he could feel the wind getting cooler as they climbed.

He closed the hood and pushed up his goggles, blinking his eyes because of the pressure the sponge rubber cups had made on his cheekbones. It was comfortable inside the cockpit with the hood shut, and the silk scarf felt soft around his throat.

The planes ahead of him looked like little models hung from the sky by invisible wires. Now and then the moon was reflected from their hoods as the planes moved in the changing currents of air. Seventy-two hundred feet, the altimeter said. Ben knew it was cold outside the panel. Eight hundred feet more and they should be almost off Vangunu. He picked up the phone and switched to intercom. "Pilot to gunner," he said. "Keep a lookout for snoopers. We're getting near Vila."

"Aye-aye, sir," the gunner said. "I'd like permission to warm up the guns."

Lambert looked around the sky, through the rounded glass dome above his head, and through the panels on each side, and switched to Liaison. *"Strike from Flint. Strike from Flint. Testing guns. Testing guns."* He switched back to intercom. "Fire to port," he said, "down toward the water."

The plane shook a little as the gunner sprayed out a few short bursts.

"O. K., sir," the gunner spoke over the phones. "Turret's all-set. Radioman wants to try the tail gun."

"Go ahead," Lambert said. He could not hear the shooting, but the plane vibrated slightly as the recoil hammered at the tail mount. That was the only fun the boys got. He always had the crew strafe during a run because it gave them a feeling of doing something on the strike that killed Japs, and they took care of the guns better because of it. Sometime he'd be jumped by a night fighter and they'd all have their hands full. It could dive as fast as you, but it didn't dare go as close to the water. That was the thing to do—get down close to the water so that he couldn't make the kind of passes at you he wanted. If he came at you from above, where you couldn't see him, he'd never be able to pull out of the dive before he smacked into the water. If he came at you from your own altitude—hell, what were the gunners for?

He recognized Forsyth's voice singing over the phones:

"No pretty little girls to dee-cee-eve me-ee.
Happy is the day when the airman gets his pay . . ."

"Pipe down, skylark," McRae's voice cut in.

Lambert grinned.

"Sorry, sir. Thought I was switched off."

"Knucklehead to Snowshoe. How you making out, Joe?"

"Strike from Knucklehead. Kolombangara in sight. Take a good look at Vila. See if you can spot any planes."

The air strip at Vila looked chalky against the dark background of the dead volcano that was Kolombangara. He brought up his glasses and looked through the side of the hood. He could see the labyrinth of little revetments away from the strip. The base seemed dead. There were no lights and no planes on the runway. If there were any under the palms, they were too well camouflaged to be visible at night from this altitude.

While he looked, it seemed as though some one were striking matches in the distance. Tiny flames flared up beside the air strip and disappeared into the black background, but the ack-ack was too far away to bother them. The shells burst harmlessly away from the first V of planes and the formation did not change. He put both hands on the stick in case a near-by burst should bump the plane, and then his plane rocked suddenly as a high burst pushed it over. Lambert brought it back to the course. That was fairly close.

He picked up the phone and switched to intercom. "Anybody hurt?" he asked.

"No, sir," the gunner said. "Charlie'll have to do better than that."

The firing was slowing down. There was only an occasional spot of light from Vila and, finally, as they flew farther out of range, the ack-ack stopped entirely. Charlie had not even bothered to turn on his searchlights.

"Watch for night fighters," he told his gunner. He was beginning to feel tired. He brought his feet back from the rudder pedals and stretched his legs. The gunner spoke to him over the phones. "Mr. Lambert," he said, "there's something in the sky below us, sir."

Lambert took the phone from the panel. "How far away is it?"

"About three times, sir."

"Keep your eyes on it. Let me know if it comes closer."

"Yes, sir."

Lambert wondered if it might be a night fighter tailing them up to Kahili to spot their formation and speed and the way they split for the attack. Sometimes the bastards got behind you and stayed there for hours at the same distance, and when you looked again they were gone. This one could wait off Choiseul in case any of the guys came limping home from Kahili.

He spoke to the gunner. "What's the story?" he asked.

"Don't know, sir," the gunner said.

Lambert switched to Liaison. *"Knucklehead from Flint,"* he called. *"Knucklehead from Flint. Think Bogie following at seven thousand, distance three miles."*

"Roger," McRae's voice answered. *"Already reported. Look for him on the way home."*

Lambert turned and tried to look back, but he was strapped in too tightly. He faced ahead again. The hell with him, he thought. If he comes close, O. K. Otherwise forget him. He reached down into his map pocket and brought out the Bougainville map. He held it so that it was illuminated by the moonlight and looked at the targets indicated on the Kahili area. Erventa Island was his, just inside the harbor, like an unsinkable antiaircraft barge. Searchlights, too. He'd go up a few thousand higher and wait for the bastard to start shining his lights on the planes mining the harbor. Then—down we go, Buster, he thought.

He looked at the thirty-four torpedo bombers around him, surging through the night toward the target ahead. Thirty-five Avengers, body by Grumman, on their way to visit Charlie. He wished that there were a hundred more to go along. Well, here we come, Charlie, he said to himself—*F. O. B. Henderson.*

Two O'Clock

Forsyth was beginning to feel tired. He pulled back the hood a few inches and the cold air of the slipstream poured into the cockpit from both sides. He leaned forward toward the instrument panel so that the air would not strike his eyes. The cockpit grew cold quickly, and he filled his lungs and closed the hood again. He was glad his plane carried a torpedo. He loved the swooping gull dive and the skidding full-flap run. Tonight he would come in from the west and level off over the land. That way the torpedo would be away before the ack-ack had a chance to throw much at him. He hoped Babe would do it the same way. It was a good idea for Colonel Sampson to talk things over with them before they got up to Kahili; but when you got there the barges or ships had always moved since the last recon photos and ack-ack sprang up out of nowhere and you had to size the thing up fast and figure the best way to do it. There was nobody to plan it for you again.

Eliot looked around and saw Babe's plane flying above him at eight o'clock. He took the phone from the panel and called Babe. *"Cricket from Cactus. Cricket from Cactus."*

"Cactus from Cricket. Go ahead."

"Follow me in," Forsyth said. His own words rattled harshly through his earphones. *"We'll start our run from the west."*

"Roger. Wilco."

Forsyth peered ahead over the cowl, trying to see Shortland in the distance, but there was only the bright moonlight path below and the gray dark sea beyond. In front of him, sparks shot down toward the water as a turret gunner warmed his guns. Little molten pellets fell from the tail as the radioman fired the thirty. He hoped that some day they'd put a fifty in the tail of each TBF. If a Zero got close enough to shoot at with the thirty, you were all through anyway. It was time to look for a place to sit down. . . .

He heard McRae's voice over his earphones. *"Shortland ahead. We'll bear north a little."*

WHEN Lambert saw the others turning toward Bougainville Strait, he eased the throttle, and called the other four planes that were carrying bombs.

"Egg jockeys from Flint. Egg jockeys from Flint. We'll orbit south of Fauro for about eight minutes until they get things started. Then Williams to Pupukuna. French to Popatalt. Brown to Aiaisina. And, Mac, you take Kangu. I'll sit over Erventa. Take your time on the drive. Make sure the egg will hit. We haven't got enough to spare for practice runs."

Ben switched to intercom. *"Pilot to gunners,"* he said. *"We're almost there. Keep your eyes open on the way down, and if I miss the light, see if you can shoot it out."* He hung up the phone again.

The other planes had pulled ahead, over to the right. He saw them flying toward the tip of Choiseul and he wondered where the B-17s were. He strained his eyes to look through the dark channel between Shortland and Fauro, but he could see no bomb flashes. Then, as he looked, he saw tiny spurts of light in the distance and he knew that the bombers were over their target. The explosions looked different from the ack-ack because they were wider and they ripped along in strings.

They were close enough now to see ack-ack shooting up at the B-17s. The tracers joined the earth to the sky with little red tendrils that bent near the top and trailed away into the darkness. He could not see the Fortresses, but he knew they must be at 20,000 feet anyway. That high, chances for a hit were small.

Another string of bombs hit near the air strip, tearing the darkness ahead into bursting flowers of light that faded and glowed and finally vanished. Still no big fires had been started. If only they'd hit a fuel dump! He guessed that Charlie had hidden his gas on the hillside in caves above the air strip, or sheltered it in camouflaged revetments. If a string went wild it might touch off something really big. It was good to knock out their planes on the ground and put holes in the runway, but tomorrow they'd shuttle down more planes from Buka and Kieta, and tonight, after the strike was over, labor troops would start working on the air strip, and by morning it would be almost as good as new.

He spoke over the phone to the planes with him.

"Tally-ho, chaps," he said, with a broad accent. *"Let's head for Fauro."*

Fauro was below and he banked gently to the right, so that the plane would make a wide circle over the island. He looked at his watch, and then to the left, toward the defensive area around the airfield. The ack-ack had stopped. A few fires flickered in the distance and he knew that they were probably planes that had been caught on the ground. Well, they didn't cost Charlie much—not with slave labor and stolen materials.

Lambert decided to test the bomb doors. As they opened, he felt the rush of air fanning up against the loose legs of his flight suit. The plane shuddered as the resistance slowed it. The warning light on the panel threw a diffused red glow over his hand on the stick. He could hear the hum of the motor that operated the doors, shut off. The bay was open. He reached over and the doors began to close again. He might need the extra speed to get over to Erventa. The red light vanished and the green one shone from the panel.

As he looked ahead, searchlights sprang up into the sky. Charlie must have heard McRae's gang. He waited for the first ack-ack to start, but it did not come. Another searchlight went up by Pupukuna Point.

He called Williams. *"There's yours,"* he said. *"See if you can put it out."*

"Wilco," Williams' voice answered. *"Quite a beam."*

As long as the searchlights pointed straight up, the others were safe. He knew they must be over the island now, dropping down toward the pass. The orbit was half finished. Fauro looked dark and lifeless below them. Another searchlight beamed out from the left near Kangu. He watched it sweep the empty sky and called McIntyre. *"Looks like yours, Mac,"* he said. *"Maybe there'll be flak to go with it."*

"Hope so," Mac called back. *"Just as easy."*

Back in the hills a battery of lights flashed up where he had never seen any before. They probed the sky uncertainly and he knew that the others must be getting close. Still there was no ack-ack. He glanced back at the planes and then called them.

"Open bomb doors," he said. *"We'll scoot over in a minute."*

The plane slowed as the doors opened out and he pushed the throttle ahead to even the speed.

The searchlights waved awkwardly ahead of them and he knew that the time was almost up. McRae must be almost at the pass. Then, out of the darkness, the ack-ack started popping wildly. The tracers went skyward and the shells exploded haphazardly above—not where McRae and the others were. They would come in where the zone of fire was least dense, do the job and get out . . . more mathematics and statistics. He hoped that he would never be killed by an error in figures.

As his plane finished its orbit, Lambert looked at his watch. He saw the others behind him and he straightened out and pushed the throttle all the way forward. He must be heading for Erventa now; it was almost in line with the air strip. He saw the others catching up and closing the intervals between the planes. He put the stick over and back and the wings waggled. Then he pushed it forward an inch and the nose went down. The rush of wind under his legs grew as the air speed increased and the legs of his flight suit billowed out as they filled with the chilling wind. He watched the altimeter drop, and looked over the top of the cowl at the water below. There was an island inside the arc of his propeller, but he saw it was not Erventa. The ack-ack reached upward and the searchlights careened through the sky, and then, as he looked ahead to the right of the naked airfield, he saw the first three planes come out of the dark hills, heading for the harbor. The searchlights veered from the sky and groped for the speeding V and streams of flak fell toward the earth.

Lambert could see Erventa loom up out of the water ahead of him. He pushed the stick forward and felt his muscles tighten against the safety belt that dug into his stomach as the plane dropped down through the night.

Three O'Clock

He was not thinking about the others behind him, breaking off to find their targets, nor of the planes caught in the lights, as he looked at his altimeter and pulled back on the stick. He moved the flap lever and the plane slowed as they opened against the rush of air. The second V had come out of the hills and was dropping down toward the water. He looked at Erventa in the darkness below and banked sharply to the right. The plane was harder to handle with the bomb doors open and the flaps down, and he gave it more rudder before straightening out.

The tracers leaped up over the harbor and he saw Williams' plane reach Pupukuna. He banked again and the nose dropped in a slow spiral. The palm of his left hand felt moist inside the cold leather glove as he reached for the bomb release. Then, as the third V of planes came over the beach, Erventa reached out toward them in a burst of flak and light. Ben pulled back the stick and leaned forward to look into the sight. Then he pushed over in a steep plummeting dive. The light in his sight was blinding, but he kept his eyes open. With the other eye he could see the air speed rising and the altimeter hand whirling around the dial. The battery below was firing steadily and he saw a string of tracers reach up lazily toward him like red beads on a string. The end of the string bent below him and faded into darkness, but another had sprung up and another and then the bowl of the searchlight seemed to fill the whole sight and he glanced quickly at the altimeter and pulled the bomb release. The nose of the plane surged up as the bomb left it, and he pulled back hard on the stick and kicked the plane over to the right. The acceleration of the plane stopped and he could feel the inertia pushing his body hard into the seat, driving him down, crushing out his breath. He brought his head away from the sight and the lights dimmed as the blood was sucked away from his eyes. Then the pressure on his diaphragm ended and he sucked in a deep breath of air that filled his lungs. He straightened his shoulders and sat up in the cockpit. The terminal velocity had hunched him over in his seat until his head had almost touched the padded rim of the cowling. He breathed deeply again and felt his muscles relax. When the bomb doors closed, they cut off the torrent of wind that had been coming into the cockpit from below. He looked down at the searchlights on Erventa. The bomb should be almost there. Then, as he watched, the island seemed to blossom into a tremendous flaming blast that leaped high into the air and grew from the bottom until it spread and covered the island. The plane shook and he realized that his gunners were strafing.

THE Pupukuna light was out, but, as Ben looked, he saw a TBF blow up over Lamuai. It came apart fifty feet over the water and its pieces fell and plowed the surface into spray. He looked to the left and saw a cargo ship burning, flames leaping over its masts. More planes were coming out over the harbor and he saw two, that had dropped their mines, climbing steeply above the searchlights that elevated to catch them.

Everywhere over Kahili and over the harbor, searchlights whirled and flak bursts crimsoned the night into sunset red. Another plane began its mine-laying run. Lambert watched it plummet down toward the harbor and saw the mine fall from its belly. Tracers from shore batteries followed it along and Ben waited for it to pull up and bank away, but it flew on, and then, as the spray of tracers reached it, its right wing dropped and it slid down and struck the water in a huge spout that closed and surged over, and he saw the tail stick up and then disappear, and he felt the tightness in his stomach and around his chest, and when he looked away a searchlight caught his plane and there was a burst of flak near by that rocked him. Ben pulled back the stick and turned right, toward Pupukuna. The searchlight had lost him. It waved up and down, searching the darkness futilely like the cane of a blind old man. He closed his eyes for a moment to rest them from the glare, and when he opened them he saw a plane falling over Kangu, side-slipping into a spin. It went over on its back slowly and when it hit the beach it exploded in a blast of white-hot flame. He could hear voices over his earphones now and he listened, but they all seemed to be talking at once, rapidly, with voices beyond their normal timbre, and then he heard Babe calling the rest of them.

"Cricket to Strike. Cricket to Strike. Tail shot away. Out of control. . . ."

Lambert looked across the sky and saw Babe's plane spinning down into the lights. It hurtled earthward, falling brokenly, as it dropped faster toward the clearing beyond the air strip. Ben felt his body stiffen as he watched it plummet the last hundred feet and detonate against the ground. Flames burst from it, lighting up the air strip and Ben could see figures running away from the raging flames that soared up. Then another explosion geysered up and he banked away so that he would not have to watch. The main searchlights had been knocked out and Ben saw planes climbing under him, heading out toward the channel, and he pulled the stick back to gain altitude. They darted past him like fish in an aquarium window. A burst of flak jerked the nose up and he pushed the left rudder pedal to get away from the arc of fire. Ahead of him the planes were forming up. He pulled back the stick to climb to the homing altitude.

Looking back over his shoulder, he saw that the ack-ack had stopped shooting. Ballale Island was below him and he knew that he was coming out the right way. He was glad that he had knocked out the stuff on Erventa. It was that battery in the hills that had crossed them up—that, plus the heavy stuff on shore near the ships. Well, the ships had been scratched off in spite of them. He tried to think how many planes he had seen go down. One had blown apart over Lamuai. The second was shot down and crashed into the water after it had dropped its mine. The third had spun into the beach near Kangu, and Babe's plane had dropped onto the air strip. Babe not coming back with the . . . *"Out of control,"* Babe had said. The kid must have tried to bring it down because of the men. He had stayed with it, fighting for control all the way. *"I hope he never knew when he hit,"* Ben said, half aloud. He turned and looked behind him to see if any planes followed him, but he could not see any. He must have been the last to get out. It had been touch-and-go over the harbor. Babe and three others. He wondered who they were.

"Mr. Lambert," the turret gunner called, "there's a plane below us flying low over the water."

He took up the phone. "Can you see what it is?"

"No, sir. Radioman can't make out what it is, either."

"We'll have a look." He pushed the stick ahead, gave the plane right rudder, and dropped away in a whining dive. As it spiraled down, he saw the shadow above the water, a mile behind him. Flying back toward it, he saw that it was a TBF limping home at 500 feet. He dropped toward it in a wide circle and switched to Liaison. Then he looked at it through his binoculars, trying to see its fuselage number. He flew nearer and, when the plane came out of the shadow into the moonlight, he saw that it was Forsyth's plane. He pressed the speaking button on the phone.

"Eliot," he said quickly, *"what the hell's the matter? Come on upstairs with the rest of us."*

"That you, Ben?" Forsyth's voice crackled back. *"Afraid I can't. Part of my wing's gone."*

Ben scanned Forsyth's plane and saw that almost all of the trailing edge of his right wing had been torn away. *"How the hell did that happen?"*

"The usual way. The shore battery nicked me when I pulled up from my run. Main tank got it, too. Leaking like hell. Radioman killed."

"Can you make it?" Ben waited for the answer as he banked again to fly parallel with Forsyth. Then it came:

"Don't think so, Ben. Not tonight."

"How much gas have you got?"

"About sixty gallons. There must be a big rip in the tank."

Another voice broke in: *"Pipe to Flint. Pipe to Flint. Are you with us? Are you with us?"*

"Roger," Ben said. *"Affirm."*

"Get into formation, Ben. This is Weatherall in the lead."

"Eliot," Ben called, *"where's the skipper?"*

"Back there," Eliot's voice said. *"I saw his plane blow up."*

"Was that the first?"

"Yes."

God, Lambert thought, Larry gone! *"Who were the others?"*

"Joe Cordell and Williams."

Ben's hand dropped to his thigh and he looked up above into the empty sky, feeling terrifyingly lonely. His whole body felt cold as the names whirled around in his brain. Then he picked up the phone again.

"Eliot," he called, *"do you know who the fourth was?"*

There was a pause before Forsyth answered. His voice came anxiously over the phones: *"No, who was it?"*

"Babe. I heard him call out before he crashed."

"God!" the phones said metallically. For a while Forsyth did not call again.

"Pipe to Flint. Pipe to Flint. Form up. Where are you? Form up."

"I'm flying at five hundred with Forsyth."

"Is he in trouble?"

Forsyth's voice broke through. *"Not much, Ted, but just enough. Don't keep the coffee warm for me. I'll bring her down when she sputters."*

"Tough luck, Eliot. Stick with him, Ben, and see where he goes down."

"Wilco," Ben said automatically.

"See," Forsyth said. *"It's as easy as that. I'll just pull over to the curb and you drive on into town."*

"They'll send a Cat for you, boy."

"Sure. Just like that."

Ben looked at the height of Kolombangara beside them, its peak stuck into the clouds.

"How'd you get out, Eliot?"

"Spotted Vaughan's flares. I was pretty well shaken up—didn't know where I was. Then I saw the light floating down in front of me. When I passed it there was another above me. I couldn't climb, so I waited until I found the course again."

"Smart boy." Ben saw that they had crossed the island and were flying slowly over Kula Gulf.

"Ben."

"Yes, Eliot."

"Give Vaughan my share of the liquor, will you?"

"Certainly not."

"I wish the skipper were going to be there to have a drink with me."

"He didn't know he wasn't coming back," Ben said. *"None of them knew."*

"It's a funny feeling, Ben, sitting here watching the minutes go by while the gas leaks out. I haven't got much more."

"Slide your hood back before you hit. Then get out fast. Might as well take off your chute now."

"Right."

BEN looked at Forsyth's cockpit and saw the other's shoulders moving as he slid out of the harness.

"Ben."

"Yes."

"Will you take care of my stuff—in case something happens?"

"Nothing will happen."

"Will you?"

Ben did not answer for a moment. Then: *"Yes."*

"Good boy. I guess it's time to look for a likely spot."

"Not yet, Eliot. Hang on a while."

"O. K. Where do you suggest?"

Ben thought for a moment. *"End of New Georgia,"* he said. *"Gatukai."*

"It's got an exotic name," Forsyth said, *"but it'll have to be closer than that."*

"Vangunu, then."

"Reefs," Forsyth said. *"My little chart shows reefs."*

"Do you want to try landing on a beach?"

"No—I don't think so. They don't look good close up."

They had passed Visuvisu Point and were flying parallel to New Georgia. The clouds overhead were becoming more scattered and after a while the moon broke through, lighting the two planes that flew together over the sea.

Four O'Clock

With two thirds of its gas gone and an empty bomb bay, Ben's plane began to climb a little above Forsyth's. He trimmed the elevator tabs until the nose dropped to the horizon. Then he came down even with Eliot's plane again.

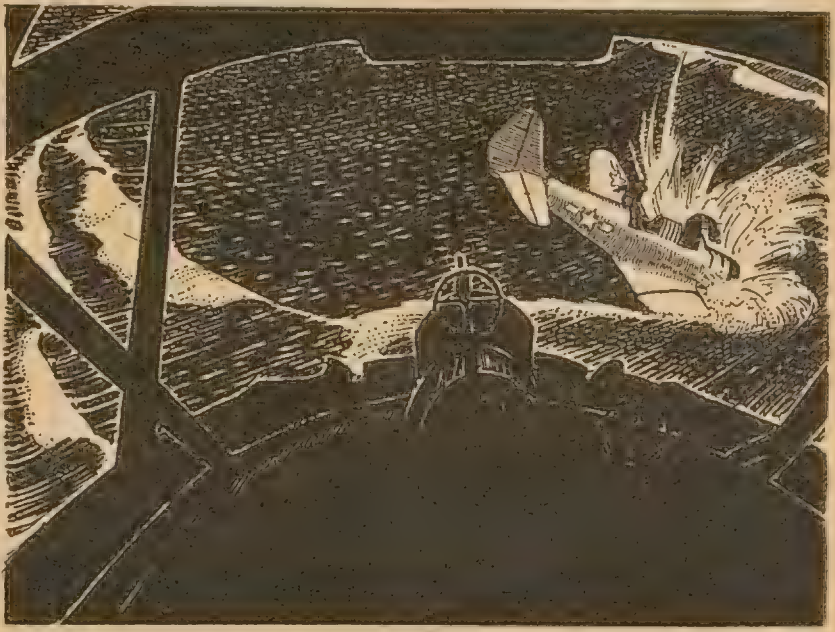
"Ben."

"Yes, Eliot."

"I can't think of anything funny to say. Do you know any jokes?"

"I can't remember any," Ben said.

He heard Eliot's gunner talking. Then another voice came over his earphones. *"Mr. Lambert, this is Thedford, Mr. Forsyth's gunner."*



"Yes, Thedford."

"I'd like to ask you to do a favor for me, sir—when you get back—if it won't be too much trouble."

"It won't be any trouble."

"Well, sir, if we don't get back by next week, I'd appreciate it if you wrote a little note to my mother and told her just how it happened. The address is in my ditty box, sir, back in my tent."

"I won't have to," Ben answered. *"You'll be back by then."*

"Will you do it, sir?"

"Yes, Thedford, I'll do it."

Forsyth's voice came through again. *"Might do the same for me, Ben."*

"Of course."

"Where are we now?"

Ben looked at the coast line to the right. It was growing darker now that the moon was fading at the end of the night.

"Looks like Vaholi Bay. Can't you make it to Russell?"

"Afraid not, Ben. This looks like the end of the line."

Ben heard the engine cough and then drone on as Forsyth bent over the wobble pump. He saw Forsyth straighten up in the cockpit and slide back the hood.

"That's all, Ben," he said simply. *"I think I'll start down now."*

"Wait . . ." Ben called, but Forsyth's plane had dropped away in a wide spiral toward the water and Ben knew that he was looking for a place to come down. He pushed the stick ahead and kicked his plane to the right. Forsyth's plane was in a flat glide, its engine dead, heading toward the shallows off the beach. Its right wing dropped as it began to lose lifting power and then the plane was just over the water, near the shore, gliding beyond the surf line. Ben held his breath as he watched it lose the last few yards of altitude. The low wing tip dipped into the black water first, sending up a thin line of spray that widened as the rest of the wing began to go in and then the plane had pivoted over the water, its right wing breaking off near the fuselage, and hurtled over on its back.

A spout of water rose high above the widening circle of foam, and then dropped back to cover it. Ben dived his plane for the spot, and saw the left wing and part of the tail emerge. While he watched, he saw an object lighter than the rest bob up, clear of the sinking wreckage. It was a man in a yellow jacket. Ben skimmed low over the water trying to see him, but the plane was moving too fast as he passed over the spot and the figure did not wave. Forsyth's plane disappeared, and Ben saw the little figure floating listlessly toward shore, its head rolling to one side with the swell of the sea. Then it was too far behind him to see, and as he banked to go over again, he heard Weatherall calling him on the radio.

"Ben . . . Ben. What's happened to Forsyth? I can't reach him."

Ben took the phone from the panel wearily. *"He's down,"* he said. *"He tried to stall in on Vaholi Bay but his wing was too badly shot up. Engine went dead before he could set her down."*

"Could you see anything?"

"Only one of them got out. The radioman was killed back at Kahili."

"Which one got out?"

"I don't know," Ben said slowly. *"He's unconscious in the water."*

"We're passing Russell now, Ben. Better come along."

"No," Ben said. *"I want to stick around for a while."*

"There's nothing you can do, Ben. Come on back."

"Is that an order?"

"Yes."

His plane passed over the spot where the yellow-jacketed figure drifted shoreward with the morning breeze.

"Roger," he said. *"Roger Wilco."*

He banked to the right again and began to climb, watching his compass until he had swung to the homeward course. The clouds thinned, and when he reached 3,000 feet he leveled off and saw Russell Island ahead in the gray morning light. He looked at his watch and realized that the sun would be coming up in a little while.

Suddenly Ben began to feel cold, and he wondered if a malaria chill was starting. He had seen Cordell's bunk, wet through with his sweat, when he dressed for the strike, and knew that Joe had got another chill while he was away playing poker. Maybe another one had hit him tonight, Ben thought. Maybe he took so many yellow pills that the stuff made him dopey. It could have happened that way. He could pack Joe's things into his sea chest to go home on the next Liberty ship that went back to the States—not much to remember him by. And there was Larry's big bottle. The squadron ought to keep it and take it with them wherever they went. After a while there would be nobody left who knew where the bottle came from or who had ever heard of Larry McRae or Torpedo Eleven.

AS he flew over the air strip at Russell, he saw three men walking across the runway toward some fighters at the side of the strip. Probably crewmen getting ready to fuel the planes for an early patrol over Santa Isabel; the pilots would have another half hour's sleep. Ben wondered if there would be another strike soon—not Kahili for a while. Maybe they'd start working on Rekata or concentrate on Munda or Vila. Kahili would be no good to Charlie while the mines kept out his gas barges. The squadron might get leave before the next operation, but there was nobody he wanted to go on leave with this time; he'd better plan on seeing Ann in Sydney.

It would be good to see her again—keep his mind off the others.

In the distance he could see the low gray tip of Cape Esperance, with Savo to the left. There was a thin bank of fog over the water that gave him a false sense of altitude, as though he were really high. He watched it roll by, underneath the wings, driven by the offshore breeze, feeling as though the plane were standing still above the gray-white fog rolling on a huge conveyor belt. His eyelids started to close and he shook himself and opened his eyes wide.

The outline of Guadal was a little higher and he could see Savo more clearly. He looked across the sky for the other planes, and when he did not see them, he knew they must be coming in on another course. He picked up the phone and called Henderson.

"Flint to Tower. Flint to Tower. Come in. Come in."

Static crackled over his earphones for a moment until he heard the control officer's voice.

"Flint from Tower. Flint from Tower. Go ahead."

"Esperance bearing zero-seven-oh. Esperance bearing zero-seven-oh."

"Very well. Are there any others after you?"

"No," Ben said. *"I'm the last."*

"Are you in trouble?"

"No. I'm all right."

"Slight cross wind this morning from northeast."

"O. K.," Ben said and clicked the phone back into place.

He would pack Babe's gear in the evening when he could be alone. He would not pack Eliot's for a while, though—not until there was no more hope of his coming back.

Then he would have to write the gunner's mother the way he had promised. "Dear Mrs. Thedford: I know that no words can suffice to diminish your grief at the loss of your son, but it may well make you proud to know the heroic way he died. . . ." Hell, that was wrong. It'd have to start some other way. No sense in telling her how much she missed him or how shocked she was at his death; she knew that better than you could tell her. And yet you couldn't just say that you were flying alongside his plane when he called you on the radio before he died, and said please write mother. . . .

The shore of Guadal was turning black slowly, and beyond it, on the horizon, the patch of light gray was widening and growing brighter in the center.

He brought up his binoculars and looked above the far end of Henderson. The TBFs were orbiting, waiting to land.

He dropped the binoculars and turned the plane to the left, heading toward Lunga Point on the long leg of a triangle that would bring him to the east end of Henderson by the time it was his turn to land. Soon he was above the jungle, heading toward the end of the fighter strip. He turned a little to the right and called the Tower.

"Tower from Flint. Tower from Flint. Permission to land."

"Come in any time. Runway's clear."

Ben pushed the stick ahead, watching the altimeter drop until it had reached 600. Then, as he released the wheels, he felt the plane shudder and he banked hard to the right again before he leveled off. Ahead of him the runway was clear. The last TBF had reached the far end and was turning off toward the taxi air strip. He could see the palm trees clearly as his plane glided above them, and then he was over the edge of the runway and the matting rose toward him and he pulled back the stick and the plane dropped lightly to the earth. It rolled along the uneven mat rapidly and he braked it at intervals until the tail wheel was down and then he put the brakes on hard and the plane slowed as it rolled toward the end of the runway.

THE sun of the South Pacific came up slowly over the eastern tip of Guadalcanal in the Solomons. Its warm light touched the coral reefs and shallows of the little bays offshore—its rays moving—until they lighted the end of the bomber strip at Henderson Field.

As the sun warmed the jungle, it killed the mists that had clung to it during the night—and the birds shrieked their protests as they flew from tree to tree, trying to escape the coming of the day.

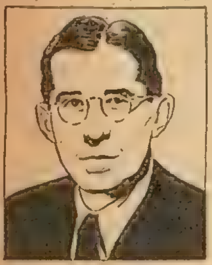
The clouds that had hung low over Kokumbona, smothering its hills in layers of mist, retreated upward, leaving below a cool heavy dew. Sealark Channel—swelled a little as the tide began to change—glittered back at the pale morning sky.

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By E. A. PILLER

MY guess is that somebody told **Theodore Pratt** to look for himself at the best-seller lists and he would see that the books which clicked off the big sales (excepting the religious novels) are the ones that add a bit of spice to their stories—and so Mr. Pratt worked out **Thunder Mountain,** which is quite different from his previous novels, and much, much lustier.


Theodore Pratt

Thunder Mountain is about Alexander the Great Arrington, his sons and daughter and the people who get involved with them. Alexander is called the Great (by his family only) because he has made a wad of money and can afford to be eccentric. His latest eccentricity is Thunder Mountain, a peak connected to the rest of the world by a narrow natural bridge. Alexander bought Thunder Mountain and spent lavishly, turning it into a personal stronghold to which he could retire when the rest of the world went to pot, as he was sure it would.

To sell his children the idea of joining him there, he invited them, and their wives, another girl and a man—to round out the couples as well as possible—for a family reunion on Thunder. They didn't like it well enough to consider living there permanently, preferring to take their chances on the world at large. Whereupon Alexander blew up the bridge and marooned them all atop a peak where the winds were too strong for a plane to land safely.

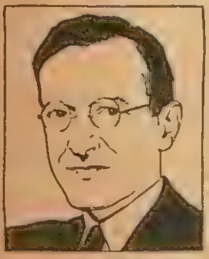
Here begins a story that is just about midway between a super mystery thriller and a fast-paced novel. Everything happens and the suspense is wonderful. The daughter of one of Alexander's sons is as luscious as a nineteen-year-old beauty can be, and so magnetically attracted to and with such an attraction for her brother-in-law that nothing can stop them.

Alexander's own daughter is rather a hellion with a curiosity about sex, and only luck and a good man keep her from a bad end. The others race around the mountain, try to get off the peak, rail at Alexander, get in each other's hair. One has a narrow squeak with death, Alexander is presented with a grandson—and life whizzes along—until at last rescue comes, and things get back to normal. Alexander, too.

A honey of a book for the movies and a perfect one to kick up your pulse rate any evening you may begin to feel bored.

Published by Duell, Sloan & Pearce, New York. Price, $2.50.

THERE'S a lot of good conversation, a fine sprinkling of humor and fun in **Davy Jones, I Love You,** by **F. R. Buckley.** Mr. Buckley is a writer who took a trip on a transport to England in the earlier days of the war.


F. R. Buckley

There was no torpedoing, no bombing, no drifting in lifeboats or rafts, no heroism to report. Except the heroism of the men who lived through every day and night thinking that the next minute might find them blasted into the sea.

But there is much better fare here. Mr. Buckley, who writes too elaborately much of the time, has a splendid knack for reporting conversation. And he faithfully reproduces some shipboard talks that rate among the best sea stuff I have ever read. It's an invigorating voyage for any weary civilian. Better ship aboard.

Published by J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, Pa. Price, $2.50.

COCKEYED CROSSWORDS

BY TED SHANE

HORIZONTAL

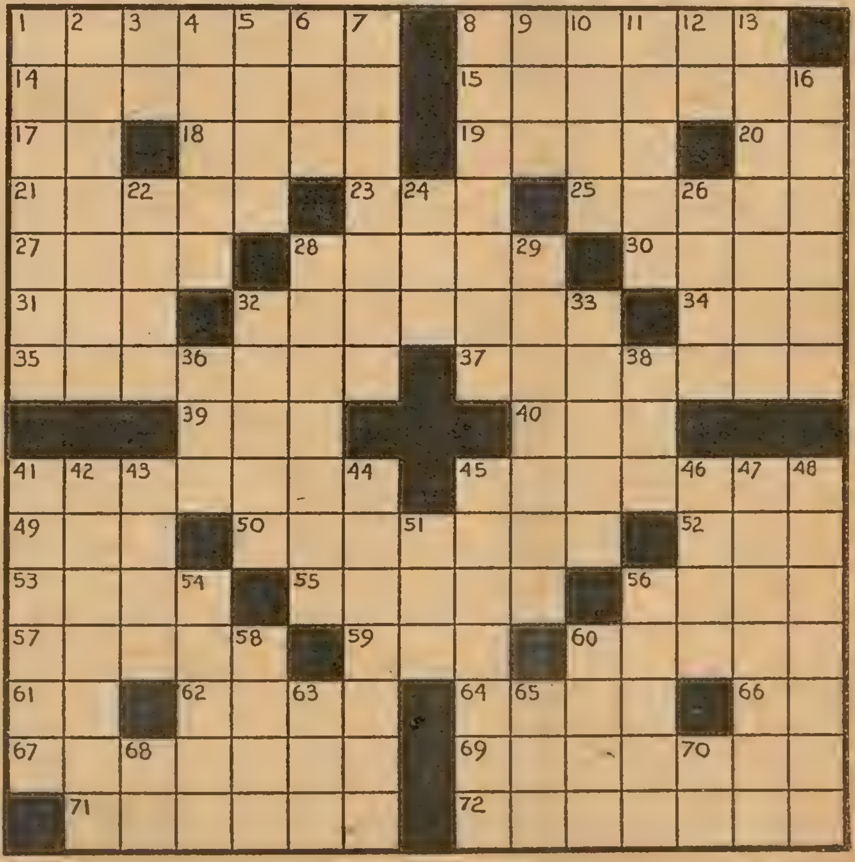
1 Long drawn-out thing that follows a pretty gal down the street (masc.)
8 Pinup boy type—all that's needed is a piece of rope
14 Booze containers with red spouts
15 It gets him egg-sited when he's cooped up with a lot of old clucks
17 Printshop widget
18 It's seen with yrs. rec'd. (abbr.)
19 There's a divinity that shapes these portable parking spaces
20 Zat Franch hotticle
21 Bruce's plasma givers
23 Clutch, often used in taxis to get around an unwilling gal
25 Animals toted around by postmen
27 Not that
28 Nippon caresses
30 Graf deposited in Davy Jones' locker
31 Little Leonard
32 This kind of head results from being hit with too many bouquets
34 Spinsters Romanticize Nuptials (abbr.)
35 Folks with frigid airs who have no use for them
37 High point in the Indian campaign
39 Chinese with the sneeze name
40 Piece out
41 They sure count up on election day
45 Snarled through the despiser
49 Turkey's great fear
50 Post ate. (They pour their insides out for a lot of gabby old dames) (anagram)
52 Point for seadogs (abbr.)
53 Bubble-water cooler
55 Book of confessions
56 Squirt squirt
57 Mortimer Snerd's simple forebear
59 Mrs. FDR
60 Kind of poker that reveals a person's true nature
61 Enjoyed the pleasures of gastronomy in Brooklyn
62 Mr. Slant-eye Hawkshaw
64 Olive's family tree
66 This word starts people running away
67 Member of the gas house gang
69 Ticket for Sing Sing
71 Choo-choo cars
72 A wise old dame

VERTICAL

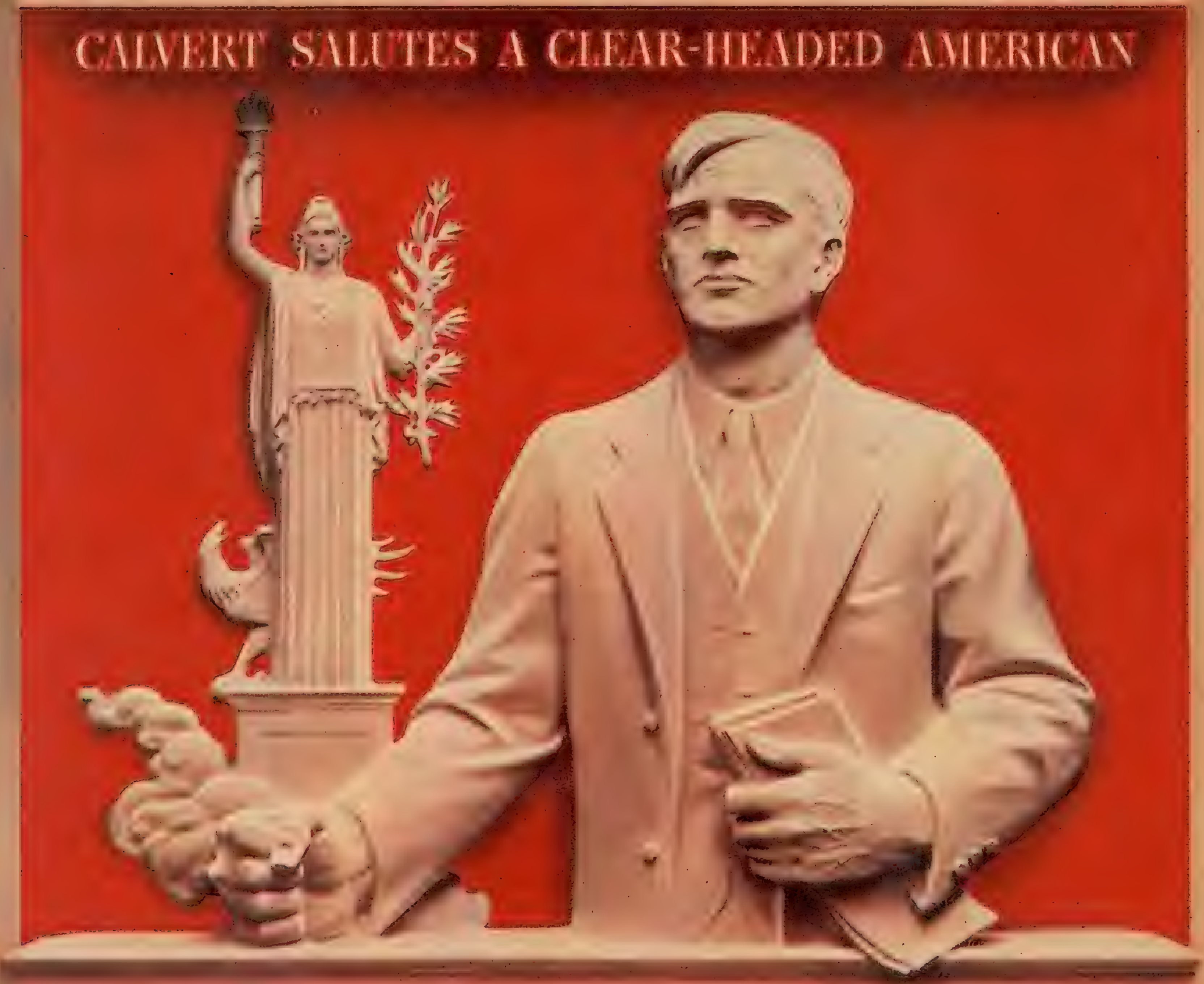
1 All Charlie McCarthy wants to do when he sees a girl and a sofa
2 Proletarian intuitions
3 999
4 Squirts for the baboon
5 Weighty little drops taken nightly by the Nazis
6 Men with chips on their shoulders (abbr.)
7 Glorified house and lot (plural)
8 Jitter till the bones rattle
9 John in Sweden
10 Extra berths on trains
11 Heehawkers
12 Blind nit
13 Tho' they've never stolen a nickel, they're behind bars because of money
16 Beef about affronts
22 Basic word in basic pig Latin
24 Redheads Adore Lollipops (abbr.)
26 Where they altared the church
28 What the booby sox brigade did after it squealed for Sinatra
29 XXXXXXX
32 What men try to be inside, women outside (ahem!)
33 Members of Delta Kappa Epsilon
36 Impetuous Lugubrious Undertakers (abbr.)
38 That ruff female again
41 Elevator operators are constantly getting them
42 A personal temperature of a few hundred
43 Brim over
44 Wolves in ship's clothing
45 These gloomy things should be drowned immediately in beer
46 There's always a parking place here
47 Seagoing shavetails
48 Political bums we're making bums out of
51 Open up the smear sluices and let the absent member have it
54 Old Messolini is the ignoblest one
56 Victim in the Faithful Murder Case
58 Musical flyspeck
60 How he got when told to go dry up
63 Durante has no schnoz; he has a what?
65 Jap cemetery
68 It's in, but reversed
70 The diphthong poet

B	E	A	M	■	A	S	P	S	■	A	N	N
A	M	I	E	■	P	H	A	R	I	S	E	E
G	I	L	D	■	S	Y	N	O	P	T	I	C
■	G	E	E	S	E	■	■	■	S	A	N	K
A	R	R	A	Y	■	S	E	R	E	■	■	■
L	E	O	■	N	I	T	R	E	■	■	M	E
M	E	N	■	T	O	A	S	T	■	H	O	P
A	S	■	■	A	O	R	T	A	■	E	L	I
■	■	■	A	X	I	S	■	I	S	A	A	C
D	A	L	L	■	■	■	S	L	I	T	S	■
E	L	E	P	H	A	N	T	■	M	E	S	A
B	A	S	S	A	N	I	O	■	B	R	E	N
S	E	T	■	Y	E	L	P	■	A	S	S	T

Last week's answer



The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.


CALVERT SALUTES A CLEAR-HEADED AMERICAN

The War Bond Buyer

His is the soaring hope of millions . . .
His the dream of Peace and a Future firmly built
To stand unshaken in a nation
free and strong.
And his the gladly given dollars, his the Bonds
To win, and hold, and shape that
bright Tomorrow!

He knows that out of Bonds
Come bombers . . . tanks . . . and guns . . .
Come all the potent implements of war . . .
Come the very means of life and
sustenance
For those who face the enemy on
distant shores.

He buys until the limit of his purse
— and more!
Because he knows that out of Bonds —
comes Victory!

He is a Clear-Headed American!

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Calvert Distillers Corporation publishes this message
in the interest of the home front war effort

BULLETS FOR THE BRIDEGROOM

Continued from Page 29

"That rat will wonder what fell on him when he wakes up."

Whit said, "I've been wondering about a few things myself. How come you turned up just at the right time?"

"Tell me why Sammy was tailing you and I'll tell you why I was tailing Sammy."

"I don't know why he was tailing me and right now I don't care. I want to know if you killed Pop Foster."

Casey's face was cold as they stared at each other. He said, "What was Foster to you?"

"A friend. Did you kill him?"

"No."

They walked on.

"The sheriff found your hat in the creek," Whit said. "I know you were there last night."

"I didn't kill him."

"Who did?"

CASEY didn't answer. When he spoke at last, he paid no attention to Whit's question. "No one else would recognize that hat. Did you give me away?"

"No. But I will unless I'm damn sure you didn't have anything to do with the shooting."

"That makes it tough," Casey said contemplatively. They walked for a moment in silence.

Casey said, "I guess we ought to have a talk. I've got a place at a flophouse called the Magnolia Rooms, on Commercial Row. You can see the sign from the corner, in the next block. It's on the third floor, last door down the hall on your left as you come up the stairs. I'll go ahead. You come right along, but be sure that no one sees what room you go into."

"All right. But don't run out on me."

"I'll be there. Wait five minutes."

Casey went on ahead.

The five minutes gave Whit time to realize he was a dope to let Casey give him the slip again, and when he was at last in the dingy hallway of the Magnolia Rooms with the smell of flophouse disinfectant in his nostrils, he expected to find no one in the room at the end of the hall. But when he knocked gently on the panel, the door opened immediately.

The room contained an ancient brass bedstead, one chair, a rickety table, and a large shabby suitcase. A cracked blind was drawn over the single window, and a bare electric globe hung from a cord in the middle of the room. It was the first time Whit had seen Casey in a good light. He sat on the bed and looked his friend over.

Casey was dirty—not just smudged, but grimy, as if he did not wash regularly. There were hard lines around his mouth which Whit did not remember, and he had lost weight. Whit scowled. Casey had been a good man once.

Casey smiled at Whit's expression. "Pretty bad?"

"What's happened to you, Casey?"

Casey shrugged. "One of those things. You didn't come here to tell me I looked like a bum."

"No. I want to know what you were doing at Pop Foster's house last night."

"What if I don't tell you?"

"I'll turn you in to the cops."

"Just like that?"

Whit said, "Pop was a friend of mine. If you didn't kill him, you know who did."

Casey said thoughtfully, "I've got a gun. I could shoot you and nobody would ever guess what had happened. You're the only person who knows about that hat."

Whit glowered at him.

"Did you think of that possibility?"

Whit answered doggedly, "That gives you three choices. Either you shoot, you talk to me, or you talk to the sheriff."

Casey said, "I sure wish you'd picked some place else for a honeymoon. But I've got to take a chance on you, I guess. Tell me a few things first."

"What?"

"How much do you know about those two guys that were staying with Pop—the little monkey we laid out tonight, and his partner? How long have you known Lorenzo Colusa and Jess Caldwell?"

It did not occur to Whit to be surprised that Casey knew the names. He told Casey all he knew.

Casey had brought up the rickety chair and now sat spraddling the seat, his arms on the chair back, listening closely. Whit's story seemed at once to excite and amuse him. When Whit repeated Sammy's words just before the joint action of the solar-plexus punch and the sandbag put him to sleep, Casey smacked his hands together and laughed.

"It's almost funny, Whit. Do you know you've come as close to being killed as you ever will in your life, just because you turned up in Reno at this time?"

Ed Nofziger

"However did you do it? A fur jacket!"

"You've got some sense of humor. Why are these clowns so anxious to cool me off?"

"They think I'm you—or that you're me, I mean."

"Clear as mud. Who are you?"

Without a word, Casey reached above his head and snapped off the light. Whit's muscles tensed instinctively, but nothing happened. He heard Casey move, there was a slight sound he could not identify, and then the light came on again. Casey held in his hand a narrow envelope of oiled silk. He removed a paper from the envelope, unfolded it, and silently handed it over.

Whit read what the paper had to say about Kenneth C. Jones. His only comment when he had finished was, "I'll be damned and blasted! A G-man!"

"That's me. Special agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation—until they find out that I go around telling people about it. Then I'll lose my job."

"Whatever that is," said Whit.

"It changes. Right now I'm keeping an eye on your playmates—Gates, Kohler, Colusa, and Caldwell."

"What for?"

"I'm looking for a radio transmitter. Gates is operating one somewhere in this neighborhood, and he's sunk more shipping with the damn thing than the entire Japanese air force."

CASEY'S identification of himself had rocked Whit back on his heels, but he was game, if punch-drunk.

"Hold on a minute," he said. "Let me get it gradually. What about that murder story you told me?"

"I made it up to keep you from letting anyone know who I was. I expected trouble because of Foster's death."

"Who killed him, Casey?"

"Kohler."

"How did it happen?"

Casey took a bag of tobacco from his shirt pocket and rolled a cigarette. "I'll have to tell you the whole story about Pop Foster, I guess. You won't like it."

"Go ahead."

Casey lit the cigarette and squatted on his heels. He used the charred matchhead to trace a sketchy map on the bare floor.

"Here's the Pacific Coast." He made a sweep with the matchstick. "This nailhead is Reno. A couple of inches to the left, here, is the biggest naval ammunition depot in the country." He traced radiating lines from a spot near the nailhead to points on the coast. "Ships go out of these ports to places all over the Pacific—Australia, South Seas, India, Hawaii, Alaska—carrying everything it takes to win a war—if they get there. To make sure they have a chance of arriving, the freighters are armed with light guns and carry gun crews. When there's a big shipment, the ships travel in convoys, and destroyers go along to protect them. The destroyers carry heavier guns and depth bombs. When it's a tremendous shipment, the convoys are accompanied by cruisers, sometimes even battleships, and they carry the heaviest guns afloat. The size and importance of the convoy is in proportion to the armament that travels with it."

Casey looked up. "You've heard of the submarine 'wolf packs' that have turned up off the coast lately?"

"I read about them in the newspapers. They sounded like a reporter's dream to me."

"They aren't. They should be; they're Japanese submarines, and they're too far from their base. A submarine is no menace without enough fuel for a cruising radius—unless it knows exactly when and where

(Continued on page 50)

SINCLAIR 100-OCTANE

fuels 2000 bombers daily

BOMBERS fly faster and farther with bigger bomb loads because of their 100-octane fuel. Sinclair Refineries make enough of this super-gasoline to fuel 2000 medium bombers on daily raids over Germany. Right now the Army and Navy take all 100-octane gasoline. But after the war Sinclair's big production will be available for commercial and private flying.

mber Pilot

(Official photo U. S. Air Forces)

BIG GUN BOMBER. This is a B-25 Mitchell and it packs a 75 mm. cannon in its nose.

ONE OF THE 100-OCTANE catalytic cracking stills at Sinclair Refineries. Because of Sinclair equipment like these modern stills, aviation grade gasoline will be available for your car later on.

SINCLAIR
SIN

BETTER PRODUCTS are coming out of this war. Keep in touch with your Sinclair Dealer for mileage, power and economy far beyond what you had before the war.

(Continued from page 48)

it's going to have a chance to use its torpedoes, and arrives at the right spot at the right time. These submarines have been doing just that. We knew there was a leak, but we couldn't put our finger on it when only the higher-ups had information until just before the ships were ready to sail. Finally we found the source of the leak—two hundred miles inland from the nearest seaport."

Casey's match came to rest on the nailhead. Whit said, "I'm—well—confused. Are you telling me that Gates is a Jap spy?"

"That's almost the truth. He's a German, of course; he spelled his name G-o-e-t-z when he was a colonel in the German Army. Do you know anything about the German General Staff?"

"Not much."

"Well, they're the boys who do the long-range planning in Germany. When Nazis and other riffraff quit, they're through for good; the General Staff just starts getting ready for the next war. Right now they know Germany is washed up for the time being, but Japan is still carrying the ball in the Pacific, and the longer Japan keeps going the more it will weaken the Allies for the *next* scrap. So Goetz—Gates—was loaned to the Japs. He had a pretty good organization built up on the coast before Pearl Harbor. We didn't pull them all in because we wanted a string to the head-man, and finally we got a lead on Gates himself. When we caught up with him we discovered who was sinking our ships.

"IT'S a neat scheme, Whit. He has a man planted in the ammunition depot who reports all seaboard ammunition shipments to him, and with that information he can tell what is brewing up and down the coast without ever being there. He knows that ammunition is shipped so as to arrive at the same time as the vessels it's intended for. When regular shipments of three-inch and five-inch shells go to a port, he knows it's routine supply for armed freighters. If the shipments are larger than usual and include six- and eight-inch ammunition, a convoy is being planned, with destroyer or cruiser escort. If something special in the way of fourteen- or sixteen-inch shells goes out, there are battleships loading up. Gates receives reports from the coast of actual ship movements as well, and he got so he could figure what ships would be where and when better than the War Shipping Administration. All that, plus odds and ends of useful information picked up by Lorenzo Colusa and Jess Caldwell from the military personnel with whom they make a business of rubbing elbows, Gates radios to the proper parties across the Pacific."

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

A book issued by the Army gives all manner of advice to noncommissioned officers. It even tells how to make men who have quarreled friends again. The men are put to washing the same window, one outside, the other inside. Looking at each other, they soon have to laugh and all is forgotten. It works: I have tried it.

—Ludwig Bemelmans

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

"You think Pop Foster worked with them?"

"I know he did. Gates bought him. He was a good front for them, because everyone in the countryside knew him and liked him. And he had a house where they could hole up."

"I can't believe it of Pop," Whit said. "You're just guessing."

Casey shook his head. "We had a man here before I came, working on the job I'm holding down now, and we got regular reports from him. He spent six solid weeks gathering bits of information and putting them together, and in that time he learned what I'm telling you. He got everything we were after except the most important fact—the location of the radio station. They jumped it around periodically so we couldn't get a fix on it. About a week ago they moved it again, and they were shut down for four days. In his last report our man said he was working on a lead that might take him to the new location. That was the last we heard from him."

"He's dead?"

"Probably. If he isn't, they've got him alive. That wouldn't be so good."

Casey rolled another cigarette while Whit stared at the sketch on the floor.

"You know who these men are," he said. "Why haven't you gathered them in?"

"We have to locate the radio."

"Why not knock them over and let the radio take care of itself?"

"Because we can do things with it. We know their code, we know their signals, we know everything—everything but the location of the damn thing. And we've *got* to find it before we clamp down." Casey's voice was sharp with excitement. "Why, think of it, Whit! We could set the biggest trap that was ever invented. We could butcher Jap submarines like fish in a barrel. Give me a chance to send a few messages with that radio and I'll clean them out of the Pacific Ocean!"

Whit said, "I thought there were gadgets you could use to locate radios."

"Direction finders." Casey gestured toward the big suitcase in a corner of the room. "I've got one there. The trouble is that Gates' messages don't last long enough to give me a fix on him. He codes them first, then steps up the speed so they're too fast to take down. His longest message lasts only ten or twelve seconds. It's so fast I have to pick it up on a phonograph record and slow it down to a crawl to decipher it. I know what his messages are, but I don't know where they're coming from—yet."

"How long have you been working on it?"

"Four days. He's only been on the air twice in that time from the new location, and I haven't got far. But I'll get him. I'll get him, and when I do—"

Casey didn't finish the sentence. His eyes were bright.

Whit said, "Tell me more about Pop."

"There isn't much more. Our man reported that he thought Foster would talk if someone could get him away from Gates. I wasn't making much progress with the direction finder, and after I saw you that first day I thought I'd better try to get to Foster before you spilled the beans. So last night I went out to Verdi. I knew about the lights and the hound, but there was a wind blowing and I thought if I could come upwind on the dog I'd be all right. I made it, too; I got in the house and told Foster enough to get him to come with me. He was too scared to talk until I got him away. We were out of the house and almost to the creek before the dog smelled us and began to howl, and then those damn lights came on and they started shooting. I heard Kohler's bullet hit Foster, but there was nothing for me to do but run."

WHIT stared at his shoes. After a minute Casey said, "I couldn't do anything, Whit. I think he'd rather have died than be caught."

"I know he would. That's why I'm going to settle up with Gates and Kohler. I liked Pop."

"I'll take care of Gates and Kohler. The best thing you can do is get out of town before they get hold of you and make you talk. Gates would give you a bad time while you were trying to convince him that you were just an innocent bridegroom on a honeymoon. You'd spill everything before he got through with you."

Whit said, "Let's look at it another way. He thinks I'm you. The more he's interested in me, the less chance he has of finding out about you. So I'm a decoy—live bait."

"You'll be dead bait if you go on getting crossed up with Walter Gates. He'll bust you into little pieces."

"He'll do the same to you if he finds you."

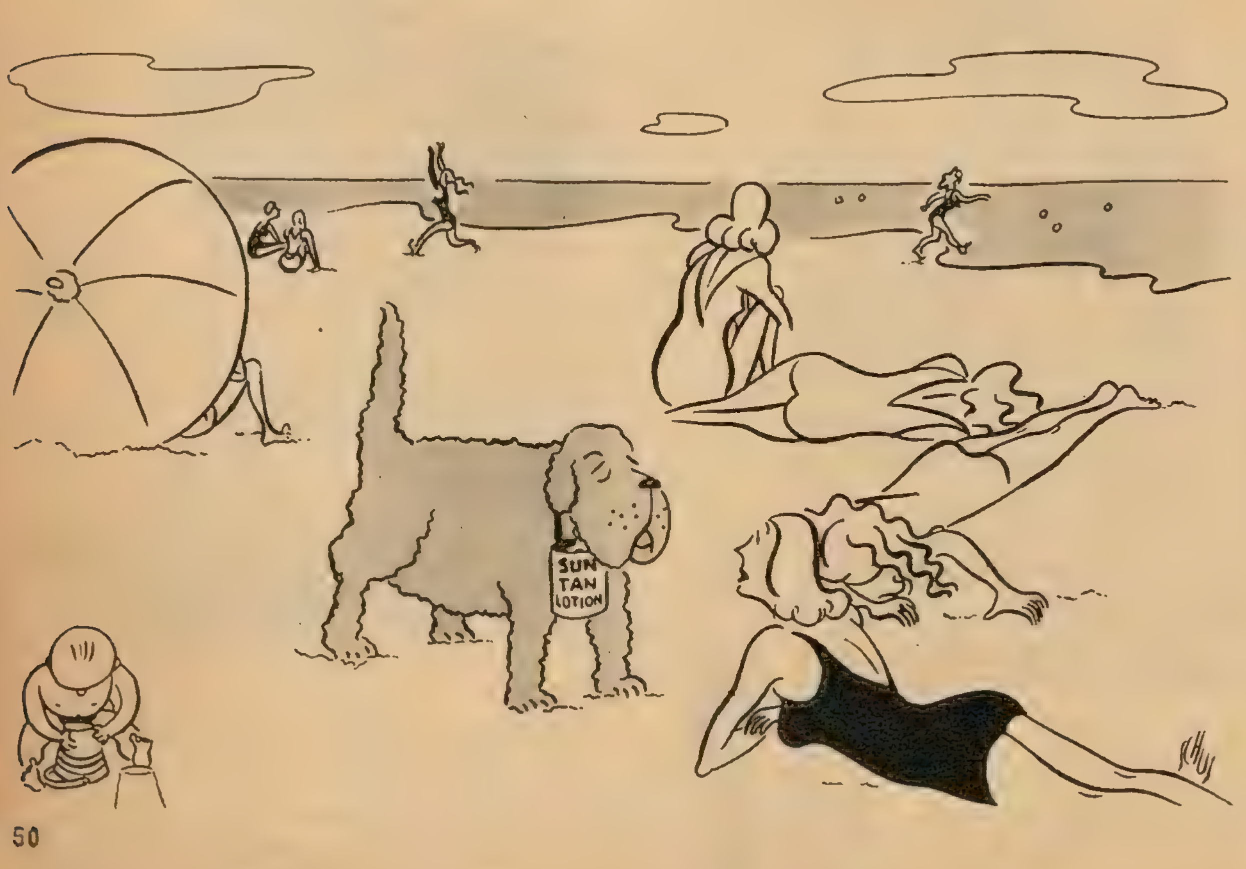
"It's my job. This is nothing to you."

Whit's face flushed. "The hell you say! Who do you think you are—Nathan Hale? I've got as much stake in it as you have."

Casey laughed at him and gave up. "All right. You win. You can stick around and be a decoy for me, and if you get killed I won't even come to your funeral."

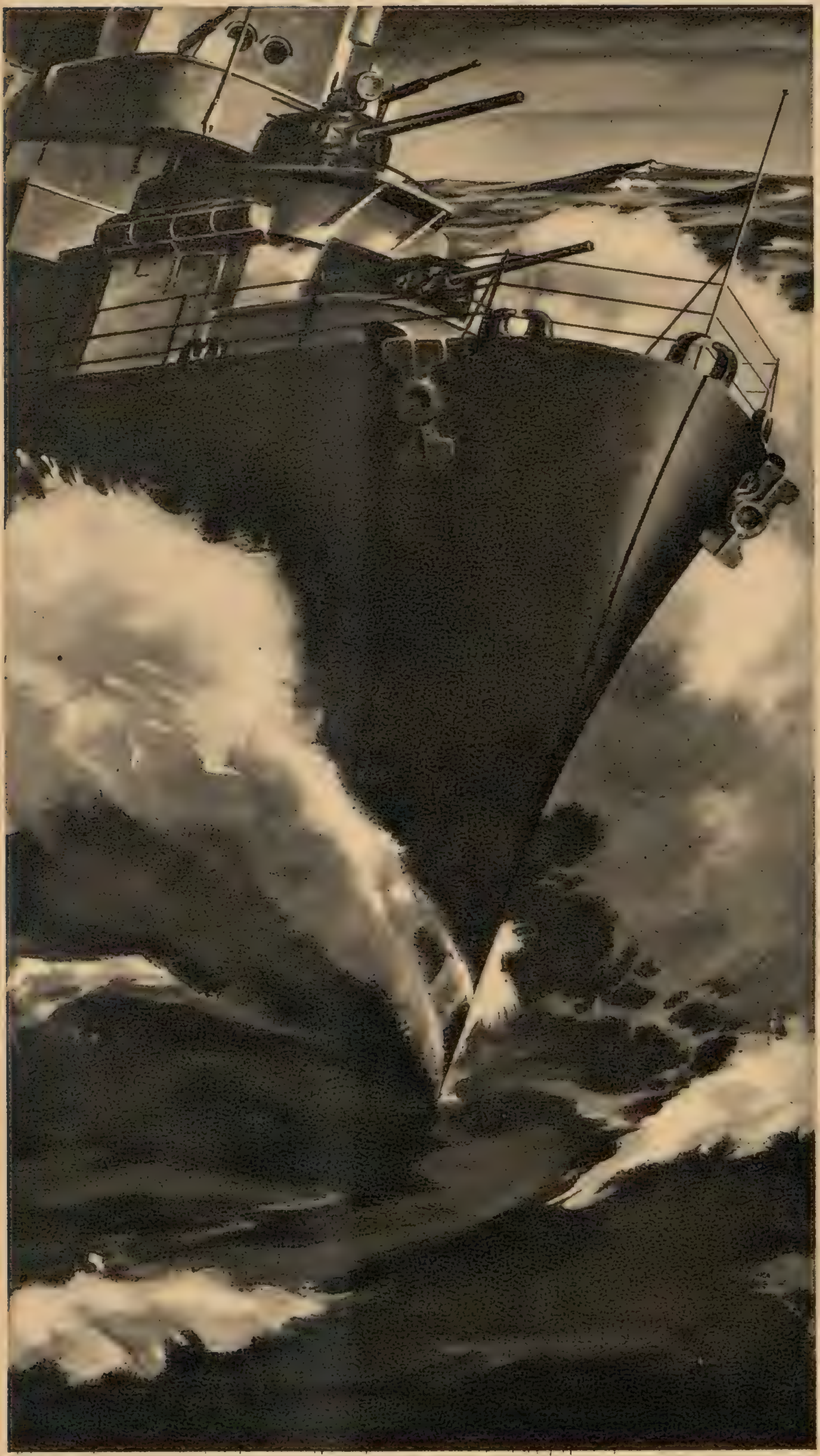
Whit said grumpily, "O. K. I wouldn't want you around anyway."

They talked it over after that was settled.



(Continued on page 52)

A Ship Must Fight ★ ★ ★



the Weather

★ ★ the Sea

★ ★ and the War

★ Before the christening champagne is dry on her bow, a warship begins a lifelong battle. For she is born to defy sea and weather as well as the blows of war!

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Defoe

INVEST IN INVASION
— BUY WAR BONDS

SHIPS FOR VICTORY
SERVANTS FOR PEACE

(Continued from page 50)

"I want you to be sure you know what you're getting into," Casey said. "They won't give up trying to get you, and I can't give you any protection."

"I'll take care of myself."

"I'm not so sure that you can. A punch in the nose isn't going to stop anyone like Sammy Kohler."

"Suppose I get a bodyguard. There's a plain-clothes cop in San Francisco I can borrow for a few days. He's an ex-pug and a gunman. He did the job for me once before."

"How much would you have to tell him?"

"Nothing, except that I needed to be covered."

"Well, all right. You'd better get him here in a hurry. Sammy will be looking for another chance to get you when he recovers from his headache."

"I'll telephone to the city tonight."

"Good. In the meantime you'd better get back to your hotel and hole up. I've got work to do."

WHIT let himself be led to the door, but he still wanted information. "Are you working all alone in this, Casey? I mean here in Reno?"

"I'm not going to tell you any more than I have. If Gates does get hold of you—and I hope for your sake and mine that he doesn't—I'm the only one who'll go down with you."

"You haven't got much faith in my ability to keep my mouth shut, have you?"

"I just know Gates, that's all. And another thing. You'll have to keep this from your wife."

"You don't have to worry about her."

"The hell I don't. I have to worry about everything." Casey opened the door a crack. "The hall is clear. Go on, beat it."

"How will I get in touch with you if I pick up any useful information?"

"You can come here, if you're careful." Casey showed him a loose knob on one post of the brass bedstead. "I won't be here often. Leave a message. If I want to talk to you I'll come to the hotel."

Casey took Whit's hand in a brief hard grip and thrust him into the hall.

"Good luck, guy. Don't get killed."

The door closed softly behind Whit.

Whit has a hard time obeying Casey's command. His honeymoon with Kitty becomes a gamble with death, as next week's crackling installment discloses.

* * *

A bank president was interviewing a customer whose name was unknown to him. The customer, however, readily knew the banker. So the latter, not wishing to hurt his customer's feelings, decided to carry on as though he knew his caller.

But suddenly a situation arose which required the banker to write the customer's name. At first the bank president didn't know what to do. Finally he said:

"Let's see, how do you spell your name?"

"S-m-i-t-h," spelled out the customer.

"Yes, yes, I know," the banker quickly replied," but I mean your first name."

"J-o-h-n," came the response.

* * *

THE MIRACLE OF THE FLYING SIEVES

Continued from Page 10

graduated at Asheville, North Carolina, high school, and received his A. B. degree at Cornell in 1929. The following year he went to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was graduated with a B. S. degree in chemical engineering. He has been with Goodyear ever since.

At thirty-seven, Jim Merrill is tall, dark, slender—and reticent. When he says he is "just doing his job," he isn't using an old bromide to cover affected modesty. He means it. It irks him to hear somebody say he perfected the self-sealing gas tank. It makes it sound as if he had invented it—and he didn't.

Jim Merrill was a kid spinning tops and playing marbles in Akron when the French, during World War I, made the first attempts at bullet-seal airplane gas tanks. They tried it with their Salmson and Breguet bombers, many of which were assigned to American squadrons. They weren't very successful. The A. E. F., for example, lost thirty-three of these two types of planes, and one third of them were equipped with the French self-sealing tanks.

Then the Army Air Corps asked American manufacturers to tackle the problem. Goodyear carried out hundreds of experiments for more than a year and a half. Finally it came up with the answer—a truly successful bullet-puncture-sealing gas tank. The Army Air Corps put it to exhaustive tests in 1920 and pronounced it practical.

THOSE first tanks were covered with a thick layer of soft rubber, a special compound, bound tightly to the tank by several wrappings of heavy tire fabric. The rubber expanded immediately when wet by gasoline and completely filled the hole. One trouble was that the tanks were heavy and bulky. Then peace had come and self-sealing tanks were put in cold storage.

Then came 1939 and war in Europe. The British and Germans were using metal tanks with a rubber puncture-sealing lining in their planes. We wanted better ones. Goodyear had been experimenting for twenty years with a synthetic rubber which gasoline does not dissolve. In a short time it came up with a new type of tank seal, an improvement upon its original design.

Essentially, "bullet-proofing" is made possible by two layers of rubber. The inner layer is synthetic rubber, highly resistant to gasoline. The outer layer is a special, soft natural rubber compound. The synthetic inner layer protects it from the deteriorating action of the gasoline. When a bullet punctures a tank lined with this material, a slight amount of gasoline seeps out and causes the outer layer of soft, expandable rubber to swell and seal the hole.

Fuel tanks of this type performed handsomely, but the researchers weren't yet satisfied. Their goal was a completely non-metallic tank. The impact of bullets caused metal to flare and hold open the protective lining; so a rubber plastic was substituted. The result was tiny entrance and exit bullet holes instead of the gaping tears left in the conventional aluminum tank; there were no jagged fingers of metal to keep the rubber seal from getting in its quick-healing work.

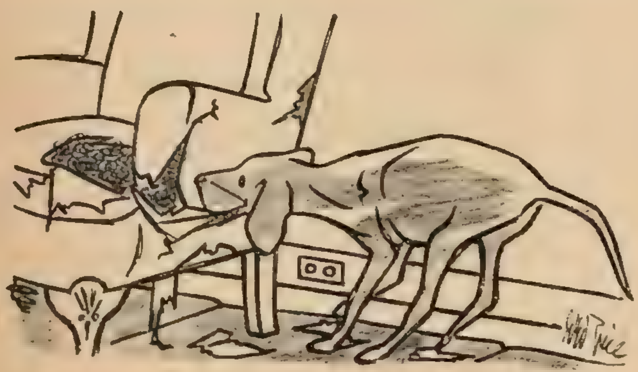
These principles were made available to all companies, and soon the rubber industry was making bullet-seal gasoline tanks by the tens of thousands. They went into combat and they saved lives, but suddenly an unexpected problem arose. The Allied air forces were using aromatics in their fuel—stuff like benzene, xylol, and toluol. They stepped up the power of the gasoline all right, but they did something else, too. They didn't much damage the inner layer of synthetic rubber, but they permeated it and rotted the outer layer of soft rubber in jig time.

It was a critical stumbling block. A barrier had to be developed that would resist the aromatic fuels, prevent them from diffusing through the synthetic rubber and disintegrating the vital sealing layer.

THAT'S where Jim Merrill came in. It wasn't an altogether new problem to him. He had already been instrumental in adapting latex to new uses and diverting that rubber product to exclusive war production in bladders for life vests and rafts.

Several years earlier he had made his first venture in rubber tank material when his company marketed a lining for storage tanks, and he had worked with other chemists for two years in the development of the bullet-seal tank.

But now he really went to work. For ten and twelve hours a day he kept at it. He tried every chemical he could get his hands on. This went on for nearly a year. Jim, you should know, is a fisherman. In the better days, he had spent most of his spare time at the sport. Perhaps that explains his patience. Anyway, he was close



COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY

(Unabashed)

FURNICHEWER: A dog who bites chairs.

AIN'TCIENT: Something new.

SIRCULAR: A round man.

ERAZOR: A blade instead of a rubber.

ESCAPAID: Palm-greasing jail break.

CHAMPEON: Strongest of the Mexican peasants.

INCHOIR: What about the singing in church?

CORPUZZLE: When it's a question whether you have any or not.

DOMESSTIC: A frowzy second maid.

MATRI-ARK: Mrs. Noah.

to material No. 300 when he solved the problem.

The substance is a military secret, but its action can be described. It's a film of translucent stuff sandwiched between the synthetic rubber and natural rubber—and it stops the aromatics. And thus was cured another headache brought on by a sudden change in aircraft specifications.

When they try to praise Jim Merrill, he gets embarrassed. He's the first to point out that he had the assistance of some fifteen chemists and engineers and the co-operation of the other rubber companies. He wants his associates to share the credit. And, he emphasizes, his method is an innovation only so far as the new types of fuel are concerned.

In short, he makes it sound rather unimportant. Well, here's how unimportant it really is. His discovery has been officially adopted by the Army and Navy air forces and has been written into the specifications for fuel tank building by all manufacturers. His new principles of construction also simplify building methods, reduce defects in finished tanks, and step up the rate of production.

Finally, a very busy man took time off from a global war to bestow on Jim Merrill personally the War Production Board's rare Citation of Individual Production Merit. At the time, although there were 400,000 nominations, only six such awards had been made. The busy man was President Roosevelt; the place, the White House.

That was the proudest moment in the life of Priscilla Merrill, Jim's wife. Three of their children, Jim, George and Priscilla, are quick to chime in that it was theirs too. The fourth, Sonny, is too young yet to know just what it's all about, but he's glad to see his daddy around home a little more often now.

And there'll be other dads, and other sons, returning home one day—all because of men like Jim Merrill.

THE END

ALL, ALL ARE GONE, THE UNFAMILIAR FACES

(Being the Plaint of a Contact Man with Only One Day in Town)

Mr. A has just stepped out.
Mr. B ain't in yet.
Mr. C is not about.
"Can't say where he's been, yet."
Mr. D has gone to lunch.
Mr. E's "in meeting."
(Always is a business bunch
Meeting and/or eating?)

Mr. F has gone to court.
Mr. G has gone to
Bangor or Newburyport
Or, perhaps, Toronto.
Mr. H is out—they say.
(How these bozos string you!)
Mr. J's "tied up today."
Mr. I "will ring you."

Am I getting sore? Dun't esk!
Time's a-wastin' ever.
Ain't *nobody* at his desk
Nohow, no time, never?

—BERTON BRALEY.

THE ARMY'S GOT A NAVY, TOO

Continued from Page 22

in equipment for the Seabees, and also the anti-submarine nets that must be laid. Sometimes they double as mine sweepers.

They are, in short, inter-island craft of general utility, moving often through shallow uncharted waters. There is not much they can do to defend themselves. They have no armor plate, and their main battery—indeed, their only battery—is a machine gun manned by an Army private. They haven't got much speed, as modern surface vessels go. But they do have canny, seawise skippers in command. And though they are operating everywhere through the islands, often under the most adverse conditions, the Japs haven't got a single one of them yet, so far as I know.

The set-up under which these craft sail out to their work is a rather curious one. The ships are owned by the Army, but their crews, with the exception of the single enlisted machine gunner, are not members of the Army. They are civilian employees and get their pay on civil-service ratings, rather vaguely under the supervision of the Maritime Commission.

The crews are not underpaid, by Army and Navy standards. The hands get $100 a month, plus a 100 per cent bonus for serving in a war area. The officers get $2,200 a year, plus the same bonus. That wouldn't be popcorn to a Navy boot.

In the wardroom of the H boat, that day at dinner, all hands referred to themselves lovingly as the 4-F Navy. It was pretty nearly true, at that. Of the whole ship's company, only two or three could have got into the regular armed services if they had tried.

The captain was a hale and hearty fellow, to be sure, and still in the sunny neighborhood of forty. The chief engineer was certainly full of health, although he was up in his sixties. Both were seasoned, able saltwater men—and the only seasoned saltwater men in the whole crew. Most of the others aboard had been released by their local draft boards because they were not acceptable for the armed services. The draft board had lost all interest in one, the third mate, when he reached sixty, and hadn't yet become interested in a young deckhand who had shipped aboard at New Orleans.

The general rule among the relief boats is that captain and chief engineer must be thoroughly experienced men, with their certificates in good order. The mates, first, second, and third, are acceptable if they have so-called "limited" masters' certificates. Yachtsmen, accustomed to lake, bay, and sound sailing, hold such certificates, which generally restrict them to craft of limited size. And it is from yacht owners and professional yacht captains that most of the relief ship mates are recruited.

THE third mate, who sat next to me over the ham and beans, was merry and scholarly-looking and seemed a little out of place in his khaki work clothes. He had spent his life as a construction engineer with a big New York firm, and, for amusement he had sailed Long Island Sound with a friend who owned a forty-foot ketch. Over the years he had taken his regular examinations as a small-boat navigator, and won his master's certificate. Recently his company had wanted him to move to a rather distant city and take charge of a big building job—and he had decided not to go. He had quit, announced to his friends that he was going to take

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"I'll need it just for tonight. I forgot to take some Wheaties home."

What a knight! No Wheaties! No champion whole grain nourishment! No delicious "second helping" flavor! Empty packages are mighty unpopular with Wheaties eaters. So better keep full ones on hand—always. Ask your grocer for Wheaties, America's favorite whole wheat flakes.

it easy, and picked out his favorite seat at the club.

He had been at leisure for two weeks when he got a letter from the Army. Men holding maritime certificates were gravely needed for the Army's relief boats. Would he please call and discuss the matter? That was on a Tuesday. By the following Friday he had taken physical and mental examinations, had signed a sheaf of papers, and was on his way to Chicago.

The relief ships, most of them, are built in the Chicago area. They are sailed down the Mississippi, through the Panama Canal, and into the Pacific—westward.

Aside from the ketch, the mate's experience of the deep and salty had been gained from the promenade decks of ocean liners, Europe-bound. The new ship pitched and rolled, standing now on its beam ends and now on the seat of its stern, and to him the bridge was a place of total mystery.

"But that's all right," said the captain from the end of the table. "He's making me a good mate. He's a sailorman at heart, and that's the main thing. He can take anything the sea or the Jap gunners can give out with. I hope I'm that good when I'm his age."

The second mate was a retired Army major who also had found his amusement on pleasure boats. The first mate had sailed around Cape Cod for years as paid captain of a private yacht.

Three men of the deck and engine crews had sailed blue water before. One of them was a weathered fellow carrying a limited master's certificate. He would be signed on soon as a mate. The rest were novice hands. There were a few ex-garage mechanics in the engine room, and on the deck was a young fellow who, halfway through Yale Medical School, had decided he couldn't stay out of the war any longer. He had wanted to go to sea. The Navy had turned him down; so he'd joined the Army's navy. Another member of the deck crew was the son of a colonel in the Marine Corps.

THE chief engineer had retired from the sea eight years before, after a solid lifetime of it. He had been living in California, and every morning he went with his two daughters to work in one of California's warplane plants. He was making better money than the sea had ever paid him—until the day he wandered down by the docks and met an old friend. "What the hell are you doing, landlocked?" the friend said. "You belong out there at sea, where there's not enough fellows with your experience to go around."

Four days later he was in command of an engine room again, cursing everything about it, in the fashion of chief engineers. He could not get over his annoyance with himself for shipping out again. The worst annoyance of all came when three Jap planes caught sight of his ship early one morning and circled for the attack. Bells rang, whistles blew, and the machine gun on the stern began to chatter as the Army private tried to point it in three directions at once. But it was the chief engineer's sleeping watch. A seaman burst in to rouse him just as one of the Japs scored a very near miss.

That seaman learned a few new entries for his dictionary of profanity, and the chief engineer thereafter became known as the one man who refused to hit the deck for a full-fledged air attack. The fact that Navy planes drove the Japs away did not allay his rancor. "The Navy," he said, "should have prevented the attack in the first place. A man's got to have his sleep, hasn't he, running an eggshell like this?"

Another relief ship captain, master of one of the smaller F boats, was a guest at dinner that day. He and my host were old friends. The F boat man had saved the life of the H boat man years ago when they were both in the Navy.

The H boat captain had run away to join the Navy when he was fifteen, setting his age up a few years. He had run a checkered career—now boatswain's mate 2/c, now broken back to ordinary seaman as punishment for various gaudy adventures and a tendency to tell people where to get off. Finally he had gone into the merchant service and worked his way up to his master's certificate.

The F boat man had traveled a different road. He had gone from his native New York to Annapolis by way of Presidential appointment. In his second year the complement of midshipmen had been reduced in size, and he had finished his education at the University of California. He was finally commissioned in the Navy, sometimes sailing out on ships but mostly working on construction projects at the various shipyards. One day he went to visit a friend aboard a ship anchored in San Pedro harbor, and as the two stood leaning over the rail they saw, to their amazement, that a submarine tied up a hundred yards away was slowly sinking—with her deck hatches wide open.

THE man who later was to command the little F boat went overboard. He swam to the submarine and, singlehanded, closed the hatches—the last one when he was up to his waist in water and still standing on the sub's deck. The people below were saved, and one of them was our host on this day in Pearl Harbor.

That episode accounted for the blue-and-white ribbon of the Navy Cross which the F boat man wore on his breast. Last year he was injured aboard a Navy ship and was given an honorable medical discharge. He promptly joined the Army's navy. If he is not already conning his ship down among the countless islands, he soon will be, for the relief ships do not stay tied up in the base harbors very long. Too much work for them to be doing.

Practically all of these ships' officers have wives and children in pleasant homes back on the mainland. To only a few of them is the pay really important, and these men could make more money doing something else. Pay in the merchant marine, for example, is higher. Virtually all of the younger men of the crew could make more money in war plants back home, and many of them have excellent educations.

Ask them why they shipped out on their small, unglamorous craft, for hard work and little glory, to sail through rugged seas with a minimum of modern navigational equipment, and the answers would sound stereotyped if they were not so obviously sincere: "We like the adventure." "We couldn't sit back there and let the war pass us up." And some of them will say, a little self-consciously, perhaps, "Maybe I'm just patriotic."

So the next time you read that we have taken another island and are clearing its anchorage for the use of our own vessels, you may picture the little gray relief ships weaving their way in and out of the treacherous channels and doing any sort of job suggested to them. The Army's navy doesn't take the place of the Navy's—not by any means. But its boats are useful little fellows to have around, with their strong engines and with their 4-F crews willing to take on anything from towing a disabled ship or a loaded barge to helping in the salvage of a sunken vessel or a bomber that has crashed into the sea—and willing to sail in any sea and any weather in their bouncing eggshells.

THE END

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

"HAVING WRITTEN an autobiography at the ripe old age of seventeen, what else can I say?" asks H. Vernor Dixon, whose No Imagination is in this issue, and whose phiz heads our column. However, you must know that he is a product of California and that he was "victimized" (to use his word) into taking singing, dancing, elocution, and violin lessons. Then he went to art school—"a bad idea, but what lovely models." Vaudeville was his next stop, where he enjoyed himself. And when that variety of show business died, he got married. "Wasn't that good timing?" he smiles. Anyhow, he managed to eat and write a novel, which "got no closer to the best-seller list than an Einstein treatise on the curvature of light and space." But he refused to divorce himself from the typewriter.

WITH TREASURE EXPRESS and Silver Stampede, Neill C. Wilson hit the best-seller list. How does one learn to write? Well, one of Neill's jobs was staff editor of the Associated Press at San Francisco, at which every midnight he had to boil down the news of the whole world into 166 words and send it by wireless to Honolulu's papers. He was some climber, too. His record is that of the second man to climb all fourteen of the Pacific Coast's 14,000-foot mountain peaks. Incidentally, he was one of the pioneer skiers of the Far West. To give you an idea of his speed, he once toured Europe with his family, doing eleven countries in seven mad weeks!

FROM THE HOT SEAT of a dive bomber, Fred Hampson, who wrote Boyington, Lost Ace, covered the action at Bougainville, and topped this by going in with our forces in Hollandia. He's from Winlock, Washington, where he cut his journalistic teeth on a small-town newspaper. And what teeth he cut!

THE EDITORS.

SOLD—TO 55,000,000 PEOPLE!

Continued from Page 30

Gamble to Washington and invited him to become field director of what was then called the Defense Savings Staff. Gamble wanted to go back to his theaters, and he refused the post, but while he was on his way west, bombs dropped on Pearl Harbor. Gamble got off his train, caught the next one going east, and has been in Washington on a volunteer basis ever since.

His working hours are modeled on those of the theater, 9 A. M. to 11 P. M. As in his early theater management days, he has a finger in every slice of the Division's complicated pie. He hasn't had a day off since the war began.

"Ted Gamble's good at his job, isn't he?" someone recently asked the president of a small-town bank which had sold more than its quota of bonds.

"Guess so," the banker replied laconically. "Never met him. All I know is, he makes us do the work."

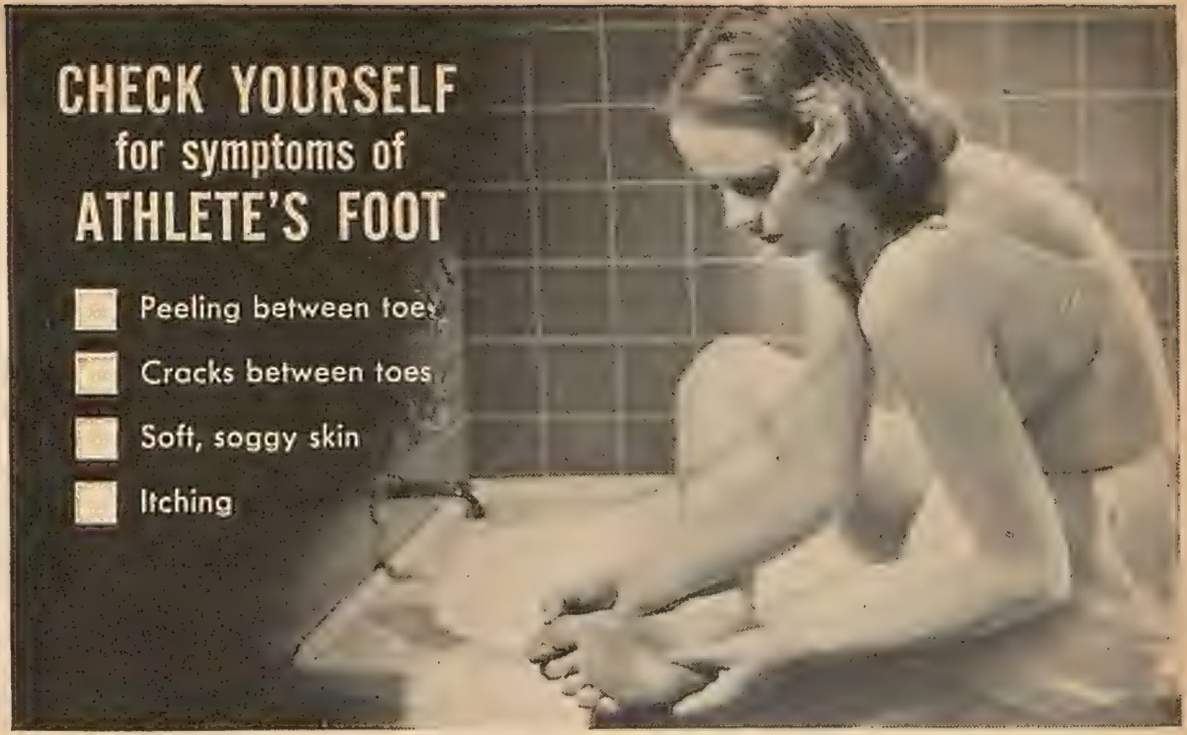
Today 25 per cent of our banks' facilities and personnel are devoted to the sale of war bonds. But motion-picture people, retailers, labor and farmer representatives, teachers, clubwomen, office workers, radio stars, and housewives might say with equal justice that Gamble makes them do the work. And that's precisely as Gamble likes it.

HIS philosophy of war financing is as American as ballot boxes, baseball, and baked beans. A free people, he believes, should not finance their war exclusively through taxation even if they could. Any one of the compulsory financing plans proposed would be hard put to net half the 32 billion dollars so far raised through voluntary purchase of bonds. Gamble is all for organizing bond-selling on a grass-roots basis, with centralized proposing but local disposing. His Washington office works on a shoestring and employs only 482 people, clerical help included.

One of his first moves as National Director was to consolidate State War Finance Committees. Drawing upon the personnel of the Victory Fund Committees that had stimulated sales of large government securities through the banks, and upon the state organizations that had worked with the Defense Savings staff, he went about the country like a talent scout to select state chairmen. They represent a wide variety of fields. Just a few of these men whom he credits with being "the people who really lead the drives" are meat king Harold Swift, Illinois; university president Francis P. Gaines, Virginia; attorney G. Ruhland Rebmann, Jr., Pennsylvania; banker Nevil Ford, New York; Detroit Fruit Terminal's Frank Isbey, Michigan; and Walter Head, president of the General American Insurance Company and of the Boy Scouts of America, Missouri.

Gamble's right hand in contacting state chairmen is Field Director Robert Coyne of Massachusetts, formerly a lawyer with the Bureau of Internal Revenue, whose position corresponds to that of sales manager. Harriet Elliott, Dean of Women at the University of North Carolina, heads the Women's Division.

More than two months before you were bombarded with the current appeals to "Back the Attack—Buy More Bonds Than Before," Gamble and his Washington force had completed plans for the Fifth War Loan drive. They had set state quotas. They had determined, on the basis of scientific surveys of previous drives, that personal solicitation is the most effective



HAVE YOU GOT IT?

Maybe you never realized it, but chances are *you* have Athlete's Foot. Surveys show over 70% of U. S. adults infected each year. Mild case may suddenly become serious. Now science has a better treatment! In thousands of test cases, practically all infection cleared up quickly with easy 2-way Quinsana method—used today by millions.

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way of selling bonds; that the more reasons people are given for buying bonds, the more they buy; and that local community quotas are the most effective. With advice and help from the nation's best advertising experts, they had prepared copy for everything from full-page newspaper ads to stickers for menus and milk bottle caps and laundry boxes.

"We are like the artillery," the National War Finance Division tells its field divisions. "We prepare the way for you with printed, radio, and screen material as ammunition. But you are the infantry, and only you can mop up the billions of available dollars which will pay for the war and check inflation."

The charge is set off at eight regional meetings, where blueprints of a forthcoming drive are presented to state leaders. I sat in at the one in Cleveland, late in April. The 275 participants had assembled from a dozen states.

FROM the platform Gamble and members of his staff—always with a "these are only suggestions; you will work it out" overtone—set forth the plans and objectives of the 16-billion-dollar drive. There were general pep talks and concrete suggestions, such as: Go to top management to establish payroll plans; the big plants first; employees in smaller plants can be reached on a house-to-house basis if necessary. . . . Use women. . . . Solicitation at work is more effective than solicitation at home. . . . Increase the personal solicitation campaign among farmers, small business men, and professionals who can't be reached through payroll plans.

The top people who met at Cleveland transmitted the pep talks, the slides, and the records played to prime sub leaders in their states. The bond-selling organization works down and down. "Victory Volunteers" ring bells in apartment houses, go from office to office. Rural leaders call on farmers. Departmental committeemen approach workers in plants. House-to-house canvassers sell bonds to housewives.

This intensified, individualized salesmanship has uncovered vast financial resources, and many a plane and jeep and gun has been bought with bills and coins that came from jars or mattresses. Legendary, perhaps, is the farmer who dumped out a milk can full of bills and, finding himself twenty-five dollars short of the purchase price of a $5,000 bond, exclaimed in irritation, "I knew I'd brought the wrong can!"

But there is the Vermont woman who said she had no money to buy bonds and then, on the solicitor's tactful insistence, revealed $2,000 worth of fifty-cent pieces saved as a hobby. When it was explained that her money was safer in bonds than in tin cans, she became a customer. Such personal solicitation has accounted for many a bond that might otherwise have gone unbought. Take the farmer who was repairing his well when a bond saleswoman called. "Can't come up now," he shouted inhospitably from the depths. The saleswoman put a fountain pen and a bond application blank in the bucket, and let it down. He signed.

All kinds of ingenious sales schemes have been cooked up. In one town, a plumber who is much in demand will call only upon evidence of a $100 bond purchase. If the customer can show a $500 bond, he'll appear on a half hour's notice. Leading citizens of a fashionable suburb have offered their services as window washers and handymen: rate, one $1,000 bond per hour. To the lady presiding at a bond booth in a midwestern town a traveler complained that he couldn't get his laundry done. She offered to do it herself—if he bought an extra bond. There are Grandmothers', Brides', Babies' and whatnot bond clubs as well as "Buy a Jeep," "Outfit an Outfit," or "Equip a Hospital" campaigns.

Movie stars and war heroes travel about as much to build up the "everybody's in it" spirit as to make immediate sales. Bond rallies, band concerts, and bond premieres whip up morale. In North Carolina, the University Glee Club tours the sticks. Local radio commentators make personal appearances before rural folk. Bond Pie Suppers have become popular in some areas. A pancake-eating derby raised proceeds from Hinckley Township, Medina County, Ohio, to 158 per cent of its quota.

Through a fortnightly house organ, The Minute Man, the National Office spreads news of successful promotion methods for local committees to adapt or reject as they wish. Arkansas' "Victory Pigs" became citrus fruits in Florida. New York devised a showboat barge to travel down the State Barge Canal and the Hudson River. Maryland welcomed the idea as a means of reaching the tiny settlements along Chesapeake Bay.

Washington doesn't give its approval to every scheme. "When you turn 130,000,000 people loose to do a job they are likely to come up with anything, and usually do," Gamble told me. There was, for instance, the Nevadan who suggested auctioning free divorces. And there was the group which promised to put the proceeds into bonds if it could get priority to build a race track.

Some companies have tried to turn the bond program to their own advantage. One proposed making the wrappers of its product redeemable in War Stamps, and wanted to advertise—with Treasury endorsement: "Switch to ——— and win the war." Thumbs are put down vigorously on what Editor-in-Chief Harold Mager calls "oomph slugs" in advertisements: for example, "Buy our less costly product and (endorsed by the U. S. Treasury) put what you save into War Bonds." Attempts to tie up postwar bond redemption with purchase of a specific product have been quashed.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

An optimist is a person who starts a crossword puzzle with a fountain pen.
—*Anon.*

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Altogether, Gamble has done a superb job in keeping the bond program free of special influence, economic or political. His state chairmen are about 50-50 Republican and Democratic. Any kind of promotional material that might be construed as political is barred. In fact, even the name of a leading Democrat—it begins with R—is never mentioned in connection with bond promotion. A poster design that showed an elephant leaping over a fence "to victory" was scrapped, although the animal was not labeled G. O. P.

For Ted Gamble has large ideas about his bond program. It is his passionate conviction that it is the greatest opportunity that has ever come to the American people. He regards it as our best hope for a stable and prosperous future. Of the 55,000,000 individual bondholders today, 20,000,000 had never before owned a security. Now the Littlest Man can make a ten-cent start towards a long-term reserve, and feel himself a partner in Uncle Sam's strongly held firm. It is Gamble's proudest achievement in a successful career that he has helped create those 55,000,000 customers for the best buy in the world.

THE END

THE MAYOR OF WASHINGTON

Continued from Page 20

said the state was ridden with Communism and needed the Bilboan touch to cleanse it. (Forty-seven Communist votes were cast in the state that year.) He reminded the voters that a bilbo is a two-edged sword. "That's me," he said. "I fight coming and going."

In all, The Man made more than a thousand speeches, and not only won the election with 101,702 votes to Stephens' 94,587 but gained ten pounds in the process.

When someone asked him, "What's the population of Mississippi?" he answered: "Votin' or eatin'?"

The Man didn't exactly take the capital by storm. He took a Senate seat and said nothing, following the tradition that a newcomer should be seen often and heard seldom. Finally he broke silence with a short speech admitting: "The real reason I ran for election was to get a place in the Senate garage to park my car."

The outstanding event of The Man's first Senate year was the grand opening of his now famous "Dream House" back in Poplarville, a twenty-seven-room affair with five bathrooms, including Bilbo's own decorated in orchid and black. He invited hundreds of friends and served them 100 pounds of cheese, ten cases of crackers, 600 cans of sardines, five gallons of dill pickles, fifty gallons of ice cream, ten cakes, and 800 five-cent cigars.

Bilbo's first honest-to-Jupiter Mississippi-style speech in the Senate came when his colleague, Senator Harrison, nominated Judge Edwin R. Holmes for the Circuit Court of Appeals. The Man, remembering the ten days he had spent in jail at Holmes' order, took the floor and attacked him for five solid hours. The Senate listened patiently and politely, then confirmed the nomination unanimously.

That speech started a four-year feud between him and Harrison. When the Democrats elected a Senate leader in 1937, Harrison and Alben Barkley were the leading candidates. Barkley won by one vote—the one Bilbo cast for him rather than for his fellow Mississippian.

Otherwise, Bilbo's career in the Senate has been distinguished by a four-hour speech in favor of deporting the nation's Negroes to Africa, and two filibusters—one against poll-tax repeal and another against the 1938 anti-lynching bill. He supported his demand for an African Negro colony by telling the NAACP the colored race could never expect fair treatment in this country and would be happier in a state of its own. He says he's "the best friend the Negro has got" and claims more than 3,500,000 Negroes have endorsed his plan. Negro leaders regard it as ridiculous.

Bilbo had spent less than a week in carrying out his announced ambition to make the capital "the model city of the world" when he first displeased Washingtonians.

He appointed Attorney James O. Day, of Tutwiler, Mississippi, as counsel to the District Committee. Previous chairmen had chosen Washington lawyers familiar with the city and its problems.

The idea, of course, was to close to some extent the gap between the voteless city and its non-resident city council. But Bilbo, turning the appointment into a patronage plum, appointed Day.

His demand that alley dwellers evacuate their homes was based on a ten-year-old slum-clearance law making alley residences illegal after July 1, but the bill undoubtedly will be amended.

What really started the organized campaign against him was a speech Bilbo made before the Mississippi legislature just after his first month in office. It shocked all Washington, official and otherwise, white and colored.

His remark that the Negroes "would soon have control of the city" if suffrage were granted in the District of Columbia was the starting point. He viewed with alarm the fact that some white and colored government employees use the same cafeterias. He talked about white and Negro soldiers using the same canteens, and wound up his tirade with a demand to "ostracize all who cross the color line."

His Senate colleagues, reluctant to enter into the tangle Bilbo had woven around himself, said his speech was "unfortunate." Elsewhere the reaction was less restrained. Demands for his removal were loud.

What will come of these is open to conjecture. Bilbo says he will not resign. The District Committee, even if so disposed, has no power to remove its chairman. Only the Senate, by a two-thirds majority vote, could remove him. The last attempt, made in 1935, failed. So Bilbo, put in office by seniority, probably will stay there.

He is a member of the nation's highest legislative body, put there by voters who believed he would best serve Mississippi and the nation. He is neither ignorant nor stupid. And Mississippi, even though it is in the deep South, does not require its candidates for office to excoriate the Negro.

It is unfortunate, to put it mildly, that Bilbo, upon becoming "mayor" of a city which ideally should lead the nation in tolerance and democracy, cannot put aside his convictions and become as tolerant and democratic as the Constitution he is sworn to uphold.

THE END

HE ONLY WORKS IN THE GARDEN...YET HE HAS 'HAYFIELD HAIR'

YOUR HAIR! Does it ever look like this—dry and stiff as hay in the field—after excessive exposure to sun and wind? Then you know you can get "hayfield hair" from working in your garden, or playing golf or tennis, or just lying on the beach.

DON'T USE GREASE on "hayfield hair"—unless you want to slap it down and make it shine like patent leather. Don't use water, either—because excessive daily use of water as a dressing often tends to dry out hair.

USE FAMOUS KREML and see if you don't say—"My hair was never easier to comb, never looked neater, never felt keener!" Kreml also removes ugly dandruff scales and relieves itching of scalp they cause. Try Kreml today!

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BOYINGTON, LOST ACE

Continued from Page 27

corps' division of aviation in Washington. That he didn't want. Desk flying was anathema after the fiery action over China. So he pestered and got into so much high-ranking hair at Washington that they relegated him to the Solomons.

His first tour was uneventful. It was an in-between period, with Guadalcanal cooling off. He made few contacts and shot down no Japs. There were chuckles around the Solomons airfields. The six-plane swashbuckler from the Tigers was finding it tougher out here. But nobody laughed very long.

The push northward was on when he entered his second tour and the Jap was shooting the works trying to stop it. The fighting aloft was climbing to a crescendo.

The Black Sheep were a hastily collected squadron of casuals, transfers, and replacements with no squadron roots or history in the States. They were thrown together in the Solomons because another squadron was badly needed. They hit upon their name immediately. But they were Marines and they could fly and they got the new Corsair and they fell for their cocksure leader, whom they nicknamed Grandpappy.

Boyington looked them over and said: "I'm supposed to be boss, so you're supposed to do what I tell you to. But that doesn't mean you have to 'sir' me or lick my boots to get anything. We're just a flying football team and I'm the captain."

The boys gave him a cheer.

The first time out they got twelve Zeros. In four more strikes they counted twenty-eight with only a single loss. At the end of their first tour they had gunned the crews of fifty-five Zeros and two dive bombers, and every burning one of the Zeros was shot down within sight of an enemy airfield.

Boyington climbed in clusters. He drew first blood on September 16 and in five minutes almost doubled the score he had made as a Tiger.

The feat refurbished his faded fame. He became the second man in the South Pacific to shoot down five Japanese fighter planes in a single day. His next victim was a single. Then cluster number two was plucked on October 4, over the Jap drome at Kahili—three more in one day and a score of 15. He began to eye the 26-plane record with more than hopeful speculation.

BUT dull days lay ahead and always the Black Sheep had to hunt the Jap. So eager was Boyington for another kill that he flew one night patrol, trying in the moonlight to locate "Washing-Machine Charley," the nocturnal Jap bomber which had been heckling the Barakoma airstrip. Just before dawn he landed, cold, tired, sleepy, with his oxygen supply exhausted. Two minutes later Charley showed up and bombed the place. Boyington's language was gaudy.

In mid-October he got another single. Then came October 17, a bloody day for the Japs over Kahili. The Black Sheep taunted forty Zeros into the air by the simple expedient of refusing to go home. They slew fourteen without loss of plane or man. Boyington got behind three Zeros and didn't miss. Three bursts in the wing tanks, and he had 19.

Those three gave him the incredible total of 13 fighter planes destroyed in a month. He passed Marine Ace W. J. Thomas, whose score was 16½ (half a plane is credited to a pilot when he collaborates with another pilot in a kill) and drew abreast of the famed John L. Smith, who had shot down 19 at Guadalcanal.

The then current King Cobra of South Pacific air strutted and preened and celebrated. He felt he was really in the blue chips. But while he wore his laurels with a swagger he never ceased to be the thoughtful and methodic analyst of sky fighting. He looked like a reckless comet in the air, but he was one of the South Pacific's keenest students of Jap fighting methods and Jap fighting planes, and probably the best man in the business at devising new ways to combat both. Despite his successes, he never lost his respect for the enemy.

"One day over Kahili," he told me a few days before his disappearance, "I let five Zeros get behind me. That was the driest I ever got in an airplane. My lips got dry, my throat got dry, my stomach got dry, my guts got dry."

He nevertheless managed to elude all five of them and get back to base without so much as a bullet hole in his plane.

The day after bloody October 17, Boyington shot down his twentieth. Thus he passed Smith, tied Lieutenant Ken Walsh, and dreamed anew of the record of Foss and Rickenbacker.

A few days later the Black Sheep ended their first tour and left the area for a rest. If they had entered the battle as a conglomeration of misfits, they recessed with a reputation as the sharpest squadron currently in action. Nobody realized more fully than they did that combat flying was a co-operative venture. They fought in pairs and sections of four, long proved the best method against the highly maneuverable Zero. As a rule the leader got most of the kills while the wingman protected him, but a smooth pair actually protected each other.

STEPPINGSTONES

Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand,
Make another island
Where marines will land.

—DON MARSHALL, Sp (A) 3/c.

If a Jap got on the tail of the wingman the leader put on the brakes, scissored back, and became the wingman's wingman for the duration of the emergency. Many a Nip has been snipped neatly from the sky by these scissoring tactics. Boyington credited several wingmen with saving his life, and any number of wingmen admitted that Boyington, who rubbed his neck raw at the collar keeping one eye behind him, had saved them by dropping back in the nick of time.

Once, in October, First Lieutenant Donald J. Fisher, a six-plane ace, knocked down a Zero that was closing in on Boyington. The Jap came down fast on the ace's tail. Boyington twisted away from the first burst as Fisher scissored back behind the Jap and let him have it. Meanwhile Boyington scissored behind Fisher just in case. Not two minutes later, the action was repeated and Fisher finished off another Zero as Boyington ducked the Nip's fire and skidded back to protect Fisher.

The Black Sheep also recessed with a reputation for daring attack on enemy ground and surface forces. First Lieutenant Christopher L. Magee strafed a collection of Japanese barges off Choiseul Island in mid-October. When his ammunition ran out he reached into a hip pocket for a hand grenade he had brought along because, he said, he wanted to throw a curve. He leveled off over a troop-filled barge, held the stick between his knees, pulled the safety pin, threw with his left hand, simultaneously skidding his plane's tail away from the projectile. His timing was perfect. The grenade exploded twenty feet above the barge, its deadly fragments adding to the misery below.

THE Black Sheep returned for their second tour in November to find that the Marines had invaded Bougainville. Routine patrol work over the beachhead occupied the restless squadron until mid-December, when the Seabees completed the first airfield on Bougainville. This put the Americans within striking distance of Rabaul by fighter planes. On December 23 the Black Sheep drew what they had been trying for—another big-scale scrap. Boyington destroyed Japanese planes. He chased the first from 18,000 feet down to 6,000 before the Zero spun and the pilot bailed out. Not a hundred yards from the billowing parachute of his first victim he destroyed another. This kill was followed by a 5,500-foot dive onto a third which blew up at 300 feet and went into the bay. Then Boyington headed the Corsair back up and at 16,000 saw a formation of nine Zeros in a perfect V.

"I crept up behind," he said, "got the tail-ender, and then got the hell out of there."

McClurg was on his wing and shot down two, becoming an ace with six. Not for weeks had the Black Sheep made such a one-day kill. Besides McClurg, First Lieutenant John Bolt became an ace.

There was not much doubt in anybody's mind after that that the Black Sheep boss would soon pass the 26-plane record and become the American ace of aces of two wars.

But the weather turned bad, flying was limited, contacts infrequent. The tour was getting on toward its end. Boyington got restless, then frantic. He was an intense competitor by nature—once an intercollegiate wrestling champion at the University of Washington—and the idea of becoming the first American to destroy twenty-seven enemy aircraft became an obsession that made sleep difficult.

I asked him the night of December 26 if he was really as interested in the record as everybody seemed to think.

"Sure I am," he snapped. "Who the hell wouldn't be? I'd like to break it good and proper. If I could just get on the ball again I might even run it up to thirty or thirty-five. Lord knows the hunting's good enough when the weather lets you in there, but I'm not right. I'm not right at all."

He went out on December 27 on a fighter sweep. Long before he landed, his revetment was crowded. Most of his squadron was in when he "buzzed" the field, flying out of the dim outlines of Kolombangara. He landed with the old flourish, but he looked tired when he dragged himself out of the cockpit, holding up one finger. Number twenty-five! One plane away now.

"I got a probable too," he said wearily. "The hunting was fine, but I wasn't right again. God, but I'm doing some dumb things up there! I couldn't hit a bull fiddle with a whip."

The afternoon of December 30, he landed empty-handed. "I got shots at four," he told Red Walton. "I ought to have had four. I'm trying like hell and I can't relax."

The ensuing days were truly explosive. One night he entered the mess hall and sat down, ignoring the food and staring into space. Emerging from this reverie, he bellowed, "I don't want any more correspondents or photographers or radio guys around until I do or I don't! I don't want anybody asking me about records. They're driving me nuts!"

The skipper's high tension worried all the Black Sheep, but did not prevent them from ravaging the Japs. Fisher shot down two Zeros on December 27, to become an ace with six. On December 30, Captain Edwin L. Olander got his fifth and became an ace.

So with twenty-five of the needed twenty-six in the bag, the Solomons' prime Jap killer continued to press and continued to miss. There were grim warnings. Twice in one week he came home with bullet holes in wings and fuselage. His entire previous career recorded just one instance in which his plane had been hit.

The new year was three days old when Boyington made his last hunt and his last kill.

The January 3 fighter sweep was blessed with fair weather and plenty of opposition. Here is the last chapter, told in full by First Lieutenant Rufus M. Chatham, Jr.:

"Four of us, First Lieutenant Matheson, the major, Captain George Ashmun, and I ran into twelve Zeros by ourselves. We split up, and the Zeros followed suit. Matheson and I went after one group, Ashmun and the major went after the other.

"We saw the major dive on one. We could see his tracers go into the wing tanks. It flamed. Ashmun was protecting his tail.

"Then I followed Matheson as he made a run on a Zero. He got it. We swung around to watch. It hit the water in flames at about the same time the major's victim hit. The major and Ashmun had disappeared."

A NAVY pilot saw Boyington and Ashmun dive on five other Zeros through a hole in a cloud layer beneath. So did some others of the Black Sheep. Most of them think Boyington knocked down one or two of the formation. They were on them cold. But the clouds hid the ensuing fight and the fate of both Ashmun and the third American aviator to shoot down twenty-six enemy planes.

That evening the Black Sheep asked permission to start an immediate search despite rains and zero-zero weather. Only a limited number of planes were available, and they took off. The slower search planes came up from the south and joined the hunt.

But the weather was thick all night and they saw nothing but jungle and shoreline and sea.

Until the Black Sheep ended their tour a week later they devoted every spare minute to the search. Scuttlebutt about sighted parachutes on shores and life rafts on seas sent them on a succession of fruitless hunts. Crews of a couple of downed divebombers were located and picked up by trailing amphibs, but the islands and the green seas continued to hold the secret of the lost ace tightly.

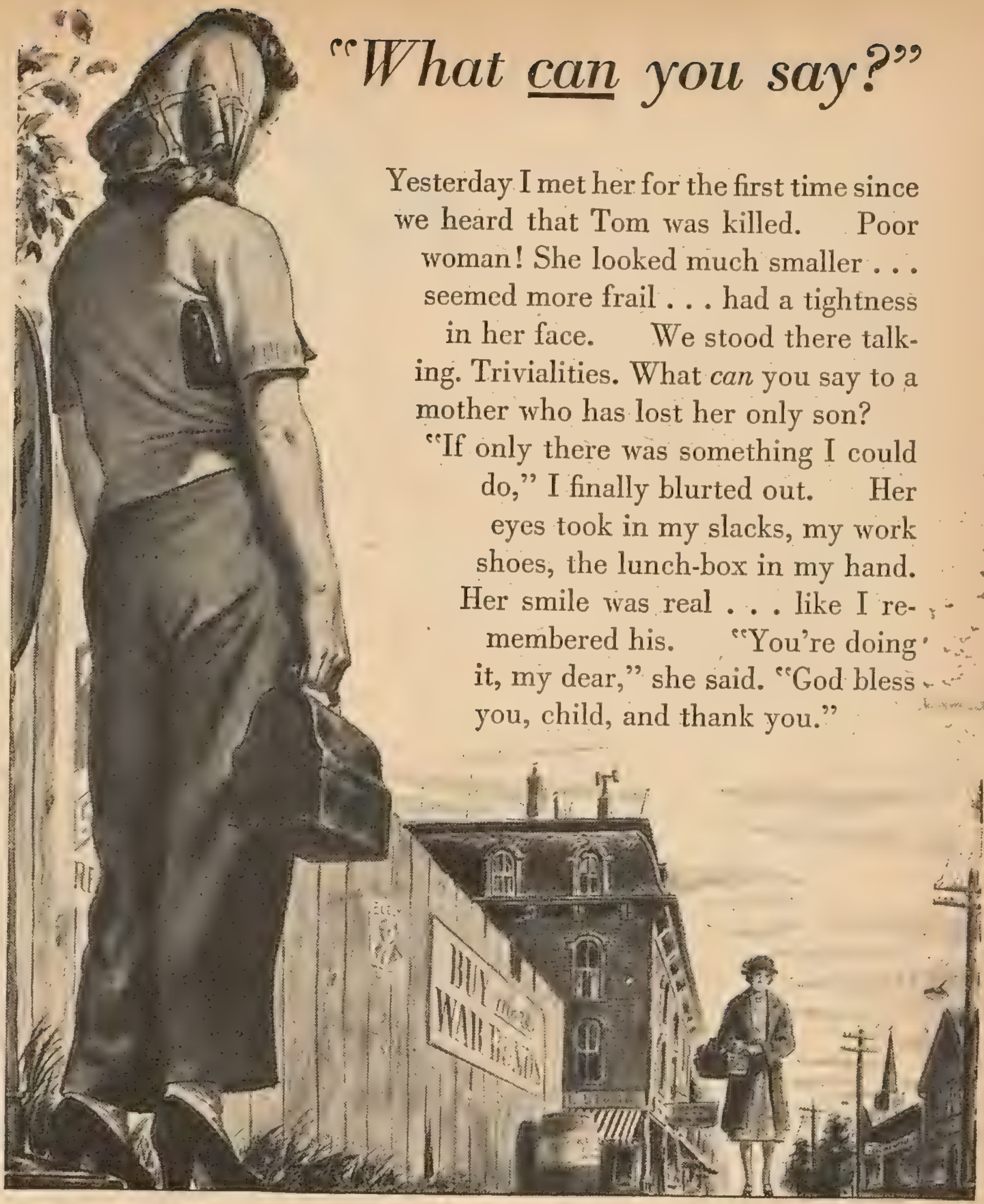
When the tour ended, the reluctant Black Sheep flew south for rest and surcease from the daily pressure of air fighting.

Their hopes were not as high as they had been but were still strong. They remembered and repeated a long-ago remark of their skipper and prayed it might be true.

Old Grandpappy had said once: "If you guys ever see me go down with thirty Zeros on my tail, I promise I'll meet you in a San Diego bar six months after the war."

The Black Sheep still think the rendezvous will be kept.

THE END



"What *can* you say?"

Yesterday I met her for the first time since we heard that Tom was killed. Poor woman! She looked much smaller . . . seemed more frail . . . had a tightness in her face. We stood there talking. Trivialities. What *can* you say to a mother who has lost her only son?

"If only there was something I could do," I finally blurted out. Her eyes took in my slacks, my work shoes, the lunch-box in my hand. Her smile was real . . . like I remembered his. "You're doing it, my dear," she said. "God bless you, child, and thank you."

THE more you do to help speed our victory the more lives you'll help save. Women are needed in war plants . . . necessary civilian work . . . the armed forces. Most communities are desperately short of workers. Skilled . . . or untrained . . . you're needed . . . *urgently needed.*

There are hundreds of different jobs to be filled . . . hundreds of jobs in which you will find the satisfaction of speeding victory. Make up your mind to join the millions of women at war . . . *today!*

See the Help Wanted ads in local newspapers. Visit the nearest U. S. Employment Office. Or apply at Army or Navy Recruiting stations.

The more women at war
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OUR WAR IN ITALY

Continued from Page 23

and the garrisons in France, the Lowlands, and Norway to replace these divisions, which we can estimate at somewhere between thirty-five and fifty.

In addition, Hitler was now forced, alone and unaided, to garrison Italy and to fight the Allies pushing up from the Italian toe and landing on the Salerno beaches. On September 9, 1943, when the Allied Fifth Army under General Mark Clark struck at Salerno, following hard on the announcement of the Italian armistice, the Germans had about four divisions around Rome and approximately another five to the south opposing the Eighth Army under General Montgomery and guarding the coast. When I left Italy there were, at the very least, twenty German divisions south of Rome alone. There was probably an equal number in northern Italy awaiting possible further Allied landings.

In effect, the Allied invasion of the Italian mainland is directly responsible for siphoning off somewhere between sixty and one hundred German divisions which might have made a great difference in the progress of the war on the Russian front, or which, if available to the Germans for the defense of the western coast of Europe, might make the difference between victory and defeat for the Allies in the invasion.

This one fact makes the Italian campaign worth while, but there is an equally important factor when the campaign and its gains are viewed, once again, as part of the over-all Allied strategy.

Newspapers in recent weeks have told an almost daily story of the long-range operations of the Fortresses and Liberators of the American 15th Air Force based in Italy. Budapest, Belgrade, and Bucharest have been raided. Vital German war plants at Regensburg, Steyr, and Schweinfurt in Austria have been blasted time and again. German submarine bases and airfields in southern France, notably at Toulon, have been devastated. Let the Germans rebuild, and the 15th Air Force strikes again. Targets all over Middle Europe are visited day after day, with the R. A. F. taking over the night schedules, in the same methodical manner in which the British-based American Eighth Air Force and the R. A. F. in England blast France and western Germany.

NO part of Hitler's Europe is now safe from the Allied bombers. And the entire roof of Hitler's Europe fell in on him only after the Italian land campaign had captured for us the great airfields at Foggia on Italy's east coast.

Take just one raid as an example. On Wednesday, April 5, a strong force of American heavy bombers, escorted by fighters, attacked the oil fields at Ploesti in Rumania, Germany's main source of oil. The Allied communiqué laconically announced that the main targets were railroad yards, choked with tank cars, and adjacent oil refineries. It was just another job of work from the Italian bases. Not even all the heavies were concentrated on Ploesti. Some units went out to attack targets in Yugoslavia.

This is a very different story from that of the only previous raid we had made on Ploesti and its oil fields. In that first raid, made last summer, American heavy bombers based in the Middle East attacked Ploesti only after two months of special training and preparation. Two participants in the raid were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, and fifty received the Distinguished Service Cross. Our losses from the attack itself were heavy. It was a tongue-in-cheek operation, similar in many respects to Doolittle's raid on Tokyo. By that I mean that it had about a fifty-fifty chance, or less, of being successful. The distances were vast, the weather unpredictable, the enemy defenses strong. But now, because we have the Foggia fields in Italy, a raid on Ploesti is just another routine operation.

The Italian bases assumed an even greater importance when the Russian armies reached the borders of Rumania and Poland and Czechoslovakia. The 15th American Air Force is now the strategic air force not only for the Allied armies in Italy but also for the Russian armies of the south. The persistent raids on Sofia in Bulgaria, Bucharest in Rumania, Budapest in Hungary, and vital enemy communications points facing the Russians, must gravely affect the enemy's ability to resist the Russian offensive. In addition, American bombers have joined with the threatening Russian armies to put pressure on those allies of Hitler to get out of the war. The combination will probably find them jumping pell-mell off the Hitler bandwagon in the not too distant future.

Not as decisive a gain, but an important one, springing from our control of airfields in Italy, is our ability to help the Yugoslav Partisans with our tactical air force—light bombers and fighters—as well as with the strategic air force—and to use the tactical air force to hammer at German sea and land supply routes in Italy.

Thus, out of the invasion of Italy and the subsequent campaign, we have brought about the capitulation of Italy and the breaking-up of the Axis front; we have forced the Germans to disperse divisions badly needed in Russia and to resist the Allied invasion of western Europe; we have acquired airfields which have made it possible for us to seek out and destroy German industrial strength on every highway and byway of the Fortress of Europe; we have brought the great American air strength into position actively to cooperate with our Russian allies; and, finally, we can now give real air support to the gallant Partisan forces.

But, you ask, what of Rome?

Rome is our immediate objective and has been for some time. What do we get when we capture it? Militarily, we gain some more airfields—fields which we can put to good use, but which are not absolutely necessary to our future plans in the Mediterranean. Also, with Rome in our hands we can set about accomplishing the final objectives of our Italian campaign, as I see them. The Germans can be chased, or they may retire of their own volition, to a line running generally from Pisa to Rimini in northern Italy. We can post just sufficient forces there to tie down several German divisions against the threat of a renewed Allied offensive, and then withdraw some of the Allied divisions now in Italy for use elsewhere.

Bearing in mind what we have already learned about fighting over Italy's mountainous terrain, it seems obvious that any attempt to attack Germany through the Alpine passes from northern Italy has long since been ruled out of Allied plans. Furthermore, any operation through the Alps would require more men and supplies than the Allied High Command seems disposed to allocate to the job.

YOU might ask then, and reasonably, "Is Rome really important enough to us in a military sense to make the price of its capture worth while?"

The answer is probably no, from a strictly military point of view. But considering the problems of the postwar period and the influence of Britain and America with the Italians in those difficult days, it will be more than wise to lift the yoke from Italy's capital city as soon as possible.

Psychologically it is important, too, because we have boasted to the Italians that we would take Rome and because it is the center of the Catholic world. A lot of average people all over the world feel that to chase the Germans out of Rome when we are so close to it is the least we can do.

In capturing Rome, then, we shall acquire a few more airfields and clean up the ragged ends of what was our initial strategic plan as far as the Italian mainland is concerned. At the same time, we shall have to accept the responsibility of feeding between two and three million more Italians. That will add a great burden to the already overtaxed Allied shipping supplying the Mediterranean. But Allied commanders are satisfied that the psychological benefits, the bolstering of the Italian government under Badoglio, and the question of postwar relations with the Italians are important considerations which require that Rome be taken.

In the question "Why did we ever go into Italy?" is an implied criticism of the progress of the fighting prior to the recent push. There are reasonable criticisms of the Italian campaign. For instance, the establishment of the beachhead at Anzio cost us dearly. The strategy behind that operation may have been at fault. It appears that the Allied command, in that case egged on and perhaps more by Prime Minister Churchill, decided that the Germans would panic and run from the Cassino line as soon as a sizable Allied force landed on their flank. The Germans didn't run and didn't panic. As just one observer, I fail to see how they could have been expected to do so. But only the postwar historian will have all the facts, and only then shall we really know whether the risk was worth the candle.

It may also be charged that Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark, commander of the Allied Fifth Army, long was too cautious; that he too often sought decision and failed to hit hard enough and soon enough to achieve it. Specifically, in the attempts to take Cassino, Clark failed again and again because he did not commit a strong enough force and, in the respite after each attack, the Germans improved their defenses. We stood before Cassino on

January 18, but it was March 15 before an all-out drive was launched. The drive was paced by the airforce, which dropped more than 2,000 tons of bombs on Cassino and the surrounding area. By that time the Germans were too strong and too well dug in and the attack failed again.

At the same time, it must be remembered that for the most part the Germans were numerically superior on the battle fronts and had a reservoir of replacements nearby in Northern Italy from which they could quickly draw reinforcements. General Eisenhower, in the North African and Sicilian campaigns, and in the initial phases of the Italian campaign, bluffed the Germans to a standstill. Using intricate cover plans, one of the most successful of which was General George "Blood and Guts" Patton and his then almost non-existent Seventh Army, General "Ike" bluffed the Germans into maintaining strong forces at many points in southern Europe. These forces, if thrown into the balance in the early days of the Italian campaign, for instance, when General Patton and his shadow Seventh Army were the cover plan, might have meant disaster for us.

GENERAL EISENHOWER has courage, vision, military "savvy," determination, and a genius for prophesying what the enemy will do in a given circumstance. He often used these to take the place of troops which were needed and which were available in the United States but could not be brought over because, at the time, the amount of shipping allocated to the Mediterranean could not have supplied them. America and Americans will not know the debt they owe this quiet, honest man from Abilene, Kansas, until the war is won. But it is a great debt.

* * *

The usual condolences were offered by a parson, who was surprised that the new widow did not seem to be very grief-stricken but had indicated her husband's death was not without its good side. "Dat man was de laziest man ah evah see'd," she complained. "But ah fooled 'im, 'cause ah got 'im to workin' at las'."

"How can you have him working, when he's dead?" the puzzled parson asked.

"Ah done had 'im cremated," she said. "His ashes is on top of de mantel in dat hourglass!"

* * *

The American G. I. and the British Tommy who have fought the Mediterranean campaign are coming into their own, too. The very nature of military security has made it impossible, in the day-to-day reporting of the war in the Mediterranean, to give a real idea of the magnificent courage and fighting ability of our soldiers. But a brief review of the fighting record of two American divisions in Italy up to the end of February will give you some idea of the almost unbelievable staying power of the American fighting man.

By the end of February, General Mark Clark's Fifth Army had been in Italy 170 days. The American 34th Division, originally made up of Iowa and Minnesota National Guard units, had spent 121 of those days in contact with the enemy, including one continuous stretch of seventy-six days without relief. Among their successes was the breaching of the Rapido River above Cassino, and an advance through the northern end of the town to capture the high ground north and west of Mount Cassino.

The American 36th Division had spent eighty-nine days in the line by the end of February, fighting through the bloody battles for Mount Difensa Maggiore, Mount Sammucro, and the town of San Pietro. It participated in the costly but unsuccessful crossing of the Rapido River south of Cassino on the eve of the Anzio beachhead landings, and later played an important part in the savage fighting on the slopes of Mount Cairo north of Cassino. The records of the American Third and 45th Divisions are equally impressive.

The longest time spent in the line without relief by an American division during the last war was twenty-eight days. A comparison of this World War I record with that of any one of the American divisions fighting in Italy should dispel any doubts about the fighting qualities of the American G. I.

All in all, we have done a great deal with comparatively little in Italy. In football parlance, the Allied campaign in Italy has been analogous to the role of the guard or tackle of a great football team who does much to open the way for the star halfback. The halfback on this occasion is the great Allied army which invades western Europe. Great tackles and guards rarely get the credit they deserve while the game is in progress. But when the season is over, and the honors are distributed, the guard or tackle comes into his own.

The Allied campaign in Italy will unquestionably be found to have been writing an important chapter of the history of World War II.

THE END

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TWENTY YEARS BIG

HE year 1944 marks the well-publicized anniversary of one of filmdom's biggest, richest companies—Metro-Goldwyn-ayer. Ever since 1924, when an obscure exhibitor named Louis Mayer combined with the old Metro Company to buy out m Goldwyn (name, studio, and roaring-lion trade-mark) o the Lion has stood for Art—and plenty of it. Always a mp ahead in the expensive-expansive field, M-G-M has ntributed a lion's share to the fabulous Hollywood luxury dition. Its twenty-year history spans the cinema lifetime of ny a top-notch star, and includes such variegated movie dmarks as the films pictured on these pages. The grand total major pictures to date is 1,326. Placed end to end, M-G-M's storic reels cover the period from war to war.

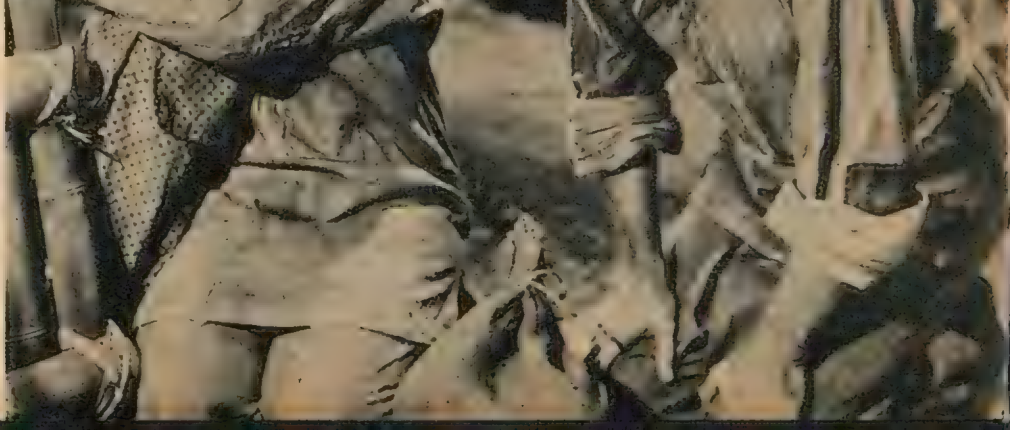
1924. The Big Parade started things off with a real bang. John Gilbert and Renée Adorée played the leads.

1927. Ben-Hur was a super-spectacle, took three years in the making. Here's the famous $250,000 chariot race.

1936. The Great Ziegfeld, an extravaganza with production plus, starred William Powell and Luise Rainer.

1929. Broadway Melody (with Bessie Love, Charles King, and Anita Page) was the first great talking musical.

1937. The Good Earth was notable for authenticity and the fine acting of Paul Muni and Luise Rainer.



1925. Mae Murray made a seductive dancing Merry Widow opposite the dashing Prince Danilo of John Gilbert.

1926. Gilbert and Garbo, an unbeatable combination in Flesh and the Devil, became great screen lovers.

1932. Grand Hotel was a new kind of picture, jam-packed with stars. Garbo and Barrymore topped the list.

1934. Dinner at Eight had a galaxy of big names like Jean Harlow (with Billie Burke and Wallace Beery).

1942. Mrs. Miniver (Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon) made wartime England a part of American experience.

1944. The White Cliffs of Dover (Irene Dunne and Alan Marshal) spans M-G-M's 20 years, covers two wars.

THIS MAN'S WAR

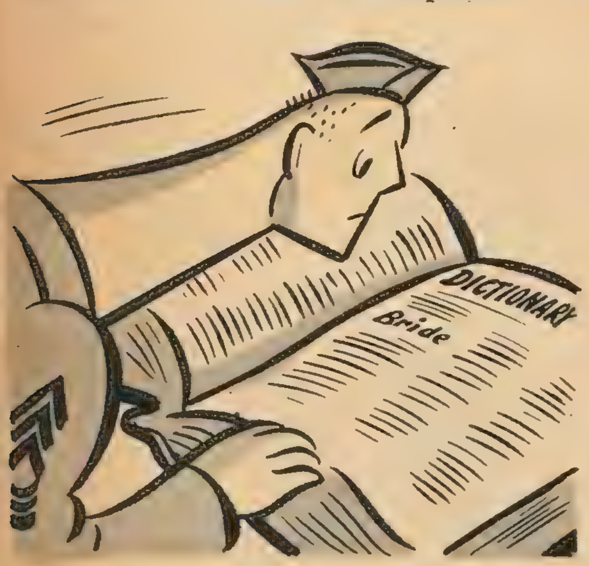
CONDUCTED BY OLD SARGE

STAND by with a wad of cotton, folks, if you are troubled with delicate eardrums. We're going to let some readers blow off steam.

The gripe session (no war complete without 'em) is now in order.

Commencing in soldierly fashion with a heading of "SUBJECT: Morale; TO: Everyone," Staff Sergeant D. M. V., who's back from a long hitch in the Pacific area, writes from Alexandria Air Base, Alexandria, Louisiana:

"Since I've been back in the states, it seems all I've heard is complaints. Yells from civilians about rationing and about transportation shortages. Growls from soldiers, too—but, of course, soldiers always gripe.



Here goes!

"What particularly gets my goat is the cheerless letters I know some men have received from women at home, letters actually asking if their sons or husbands can't get discharges for some cause or other and be sent home. Is that any way to maintain morale?"

Private A. H. D., from "A Southwest Pacific Combat Zone," writes:

"Just got a letter telling me my best girl has become engaged to some U. S. O. commando. If she likes him, I won't blame her, but personally I doubt whether any of those khaki-wacky girls look beyond their noses these days when they say, 'I will.'

"Well, more fellows than myself have left home with 'I'll wait for you, dear,' ringing in their ears, and have learned how soon some girls can forget. I don't want to brag, but we've done all right in more than two years out here. Even if those fickle-minded girls don't appreciate us, we're going to keep on until this mess is over."

A Coast Guardsman at Belmar, New Jersey, gives out with:

"It's amazing to a mere male how quickly these Waves and SPARS get petty officer ratings. A month ago I applied for a pair of pants to a Wave in the clothing depot. She was a Storekeeper 3/C. A week ago I saw the same gal and she was a Storekeeper 2/C. They do a good job.

"But how come gals get the 'crows' so fast, while guys are told all ratings are frozen?"

And Sergeant B. A. T., a stout fellow at Camp Hood, Texas, says:

"The ignorance of that girl who wrote you that A. P. O. stood for Across the Pacific Ocean is appalling. But maybe she isn't as awful as she sounds. Perhaps her failure to realize that A. P. O. stands for Army Post Office was just due to lack of sufficient informative reading. Therefore, I suggest This Man's War should be longer."

"We love the Navy and are proud to wear the uniform," writes a Wave. "Our job is fine and the food could be no better. But we want to know why the WACs go overseas and we can't. We have brothers, friends, and husbands over there, and many of us fully expected to go, too. Volunteers for overseas, at least, should be sent.

"This isn't fair!"

That fills today's gripe quota, folks. Yours for sunshine.

OLD SARGE.

* * *

My husband and I were married in the post chapel of an Eastern Army camp. After the ceremony the chaplain asked a question that stumped us all. It was, "How long is a bride a bride?" I've asked a number of people and none could say. So, as a faithful reader, I'm turning to you for the answer. Expectantly,

Mrs. J. C., Baltimore, Md.

Lady, I can't find a word in Army regulations about this matter. My dictionary isn't very helpful, either. It just says a bride is a woman newly married or about to be married. So here goes Old Sarge sticking his neck out again. I'll say a bride is a bride as long as she feels like one.

* * *

Is there any way my husband can be notified in a hurry when he becomes a father? He is serving overseas and I have only an A. P. O. number as his address. Please answer quickly.

Mrs. X., San Diego, Calif.

The cable companies will accept messages for an A. P. O. address. Good luck!

* * *

Sarge, is it permissible or proper for a commanding officer to inform a soldier's parents that he is a bad boy in camp or has been A. W. O. L.? Now that we're men, some of us think we can make up our own minds as to what is right or wrong, without interference from higher up. *Pvt. D., Camp Butner, N. C.*

The C. O. of an A. W. O. L. soldier has orders from the Provost Marshal General to notify not only the absent soldier's next of kin, but also the chief of police of his home town. It is the C. O.'s duty to make every effort to have the soldier's kin urge him to return before he is classified as a deserter. I suggest that some of you who are so positive you can decide for yourself what is "right or wrong" had better sit down and start thinking this matter over again.

Going A. W. O. L. is a poor indication of straight thinking.

A soldier in Italy asks me to get information to settle an argument in his outfit as to the comparative rank of a captured war correspondent. He contends that the correspondent would rate the same consideration as a major general. Is that right? *A. F., Dearborn, Mich.*

Our correspondents are doing a great job—but they don't rank that high. War correspondents are given the assimilated rank of captain. That insures that they will receive the treatment and the pay of a prisoner of war of that rank in case they fall into the hands of the enemy.

* * *

I have just received a medical discharge from the Army and would like to know how long I am permitted to wear the uniform. Can I wear it on holidays and special occasions, such as church gatherings or parties for servicemen?

Ex-Pvt. B. L., Detroit, Mich.

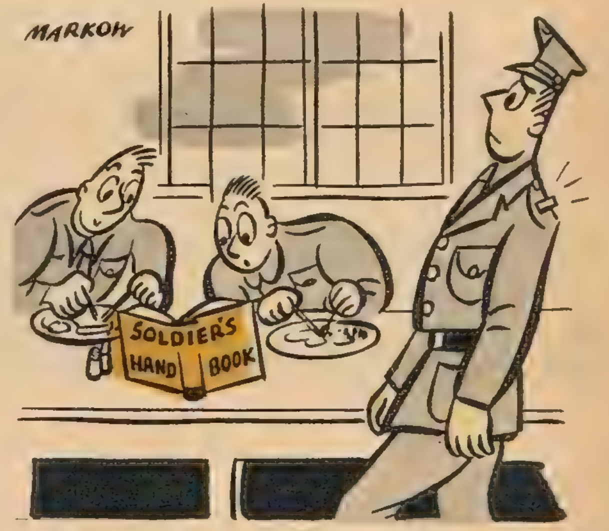
A discharged soldier is permitted to wear his uniform until he arrives home, after which it is unlawful for him to wear it any longer. He is supposed to get home from the place of discharge with reasonable speed, and in no case, say the rules, "should his transit home take more than three months."

As for holidays and special occasions, the uniform may be worn only by soldiers who remain members of the Enlisted Reserve, in which case it may be worn at Enlisted Reserve functions such as parades, drills, or reviews.

* * *

Settle a dispute for us, Sarge. Which ranks, a first sergeant or a master sergeant? *Pvt. J. M., Chicago.*

Both sergeants are in the top pay grade, so neither "ranks" because of his grade. However, in certain instances the one with the earlier date of warrant would have precedence.



"At ease"

* * *

If men are eating in their mess hall and an officer enters, should some one call "Attention"? *Cpl. R. T., Camp Swift, Tex.*

The men should remain seated "at ease" and continue eating, unless the officer directs otherwise. See Soldier's Handbook, FM 21-100, Par. 31 (b).

This department of Liberty is for the men and women of the armed forces of the United States: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, also their families and friends. The identity of letter writers will not be disclosed without their permission. Address your letters to: "Old Sarge," c/o Liberty, 205 East 42d St., New York 17, N. Y.

NO IMAGINATION

Continued from Page 17

thoroughly and well. But maybe that's just the thing to put us on the red side of the ledger."

"H'mmm. I see what you mean." Hennery puffed at the cigar for a moment, then said, "You think Gardner is more imaginative, the type to figure out short cuts and save us money."

Howie smiled grimly. "Exactly."

"Then give him the job."

Howie shook his head. "It isn't that easy. If I give it to Lou Gardner, we lose Joe. I can see that coming. They don't get along. Lou thinks Joe is just a big dumb cluck anyone can push around. And Lou is the kind to enjoy that set-up. Only Joe isn't that way at all. The reason the big Irishman seems that way is because he's so damned powerful he's scared to death of tangling with another man and killing him. That's the truth. I saw Joe lose his head on a diving barge one day and slap a big Swede across the face with the back of his hand. Just the back of his hand, mind you. The Swede went to the hospital with a smashed nose and a broken cheekbone. Joe was so ashamed of himself he paid the Swede's hospital bills, took care of his family, and even wanted to pay his wages out of his own pocket." Howie grinned and slowly nodded. "He's a grand guy, that big Irishman."

Hennery impatiently got to his feet and stamped out the cigar. "Howie," he said, "I want this settled today. One way or the other. I don't like to stick my nose into your bailiwick, but—"

"You don't have to explain. I feel the same way you do." He got to his feet, glanced out the window at the big salvage tug, then looked back at Hennery. "O. K. But I'm not going to shoulder all the responsibility. We're going out to look over a sunken barge. You come along with us, watch the two men at work, and help me make the decision."

Hennery sighed with relief. "Good. We'll get this settled."

JOE had breakfast at a stevedores' hangout on lower Market Street, then walked to the company pier and through the administrative offices. The entire staff smiled and waved at him as he shoved his enormous shoulders and barrel chest down the aisle. He walked the length of the gloomy cavernous warehouse and passed Howie's office. Through one of the windows he saw Hennery inside. He whistled.

"Things are cooking," he mumbled under his breath.

He stepped from the pier onto the deck of the ocean-going salvage tug and looked up at the wheelhouse. Captain O'Toole's red face stuck out a window and grinned down at him. "Hiya, Joe? How are all the shanty Irish this fine morning?"

Joe laughed. "You come down here, O'Toole, and I'll bash in that ugly face o' yours."

"Tsk-tsk. No culture. No culture at all. That's the Irish for yez. Sure, and I always tell me fine wife Maggie, 'Maggie darlin',' I say, 'don't ever have nothin' to do with them dumb Irish, or sure and ye'll always find yerself in hot water. Stay away from the Irish,' I says."

Joe grinned and moved away from him. Otherwise O'Toole would talk the whole morning through. He went around the wheelhouse, peered through a hatch into the engine room, and yelled a good morning to the grimy engineer. Then he went aft, where the tenders and helpers were collected, all of them busy preparing the bulky diving gear.

Lou Gardner was standing with them, tinkering with one of the telephone headsets. He glanced up at Joe as he approached, and smiled. Lou was a tall man, almost too tall for a diver, with good shoulders, slim hips, and long muscles of steel wire. With his light blond hair, fair skin, and deep blue eyes, he was the perfect picture of a viking. But there was a cocksureness about him that was irritating, not only to Joe but to the rest of the crew as well. Most of them were privately hoping that Joe would murder the taller man and get it over with. The outcome of such a fight, of course, was never in doubt in any of their minds. They had too often seen Joe lift 300-pound kegs of white lead and toss them onto the deck. Lou would undoubtedly be faster and cut Joe a little, but one solid punch from Joe and it would all be over.

Joe knew what they were thinking and dreaded the idea. He knew something of which they were not aware. In a real fight, Joe went blind with rage and could not stop with one punch. He fervently hoped he would never have to tangle with Gardner.

He moved into the circle of helpers and asked Lou, "Just the two of us today?"

HARDTACK

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Lou nodded. "Yeah. You know that big steel barge that was sunk in the storm last week? That's the one. They say it's undamaged."

Joe frowned. "Then how was it sunk?"

Lou sadly shook his head. "That's a dumb question. The hatches were open, of course, and the barge was towing empty on a short hawser. The high wind and the waves kept pulling it under until it flooded and went down. Geez, couldn't you figure that out?"

Joe's eyes narrowed and his lips thinned. He slowly let out his breath and turned away from Lou. He concentrated on examining his own diving suit so he would not have to talk.

Hennery and Reynolds came aboard and went into the wheelhouse. The engines of the big tug purred; she moved away from the pier and headed out into the bay. They passed under the bay bridge and headed toward a red-can buoy a mile beyond the bridge. The engines slowed and the propellers churned white water as the can buoy was hooked and pulled aboard. The manila line leading down to the floor of the bay was made secure on the port side of the tug, then the bow and stern anchors were dropped. The tug was riding squarely over the sunken barge.

Hennery and Reynolds came out of the wheelhouse and joined the two men as they were helped into their cumbersome diving suits of canvas, rubber, copper, and lead. Their helmets were dogged down, but the forward ports were left open so they could talk.

Joe asked Howie, "What's the depth here?"

"About ten fathoms to the deck of the barge."

"I'll go down and have a look."

Howie tugged at his lower lip and said, "I want the two of you to go down together. I—uh—I'd like a report from each of you."

JOE looked at Howie, then at Hennery. His smile faded and a thoughtful look crept into his eyes. This was obviously the day. That was why the big boss was present. The two of them were going to choose a diving master. Joe glanced at Lou, who also was well aware of the situation. Lou grinned and winked at him. Joe frowned at Hennery, who was uneasily looking out over the bay, then slammed the front port of his helmet.

He and Lou stepped onto the diving stage. The boom swung them out over the water and lowered them until only their heads and shoulders were above the surface. They tested their air valves and the built-in telephones and signaled that everything was all right. The diving stage dropped them below the water and down to four fathoms. Joe swallowed deeply to break the pressure in his eardrums and equalized the air pressure in his suit just below the point of buoyancy. He glanced through the glass ports of his helmet at Lou, nodded at him, then stepped off the stage.

Joe slid down the manila line hand over hand as the chill of deeper water crept through his suit. He could see nothing. The water was simply a grayish blue, muddied from the recent storm and rains. But he kept his eyes turned down, and finally a huge dark object swam into his range of vision. He dropped onto the sunken barge and his lead shoes echoed hollowly against the steel, setting up ringing vibrations within his helmet. He stepped aside, then, and Lou joined him on the barge.

Joe placed his helmet against Lou's and transmitted his voice through the contact of metal; "You go up to the right and

THE HOME FRONT

"Nobody'll give him a job. He's at that awkward age—eighteen to twenty-nine."

I'll go to the left. We can meet back here."

Lou nodded and moved off. At twenty feet apart neither could see the other in the dim underwater light.

Joe walked slowly along the deck of the barge and thoroughly examined it from stem to stern. It was a boxlike vessel about one hundred and forty feet long, with a beam of thirty-five feet. There were four huge hatches altogether with steel hatch covers about twenty-five feet square. Each of the covers had been drawn aside, leaving the hatches exposed. At the stern of the barge was a small structure, somewhat like a wheelhouse, for the bargemaster. Forward at the bow was a good winch and a rigid boom and crane. There was nothing else.

Joe examined the clamps for dogging down the hatch covers, then made his way back to the manila line leading up to the surface. Lou was nowhere in sight, nor were his lines visible. Joe grinned wryly. Lou had already gone above with his report.

Joe took his time ascending, properly decompressing himself, and half an hour later stood on the deck of the salvage tug. The tenders pulled off his helmet and handed him a cigarette. He glanced at Lou, who was leaning against the wheelhouse, smiling at him.

Howie asked, "All right, Joe. How about it?"

"Hasn't Lou given you his report?"

"We want yours, too."

"Well," Joe replied, "the barge is intact. No damage that I could discover. All that's necessary is to slide the hatches into place, dog them down and seal them, pump the water out of the hold, and raise it to the surface."

Howie glanced shrewdly at Hennery, then asked, "How long will it take you to get it ready for pumping?"

"Oh—two days. We can sweat the hatches into place with the crane here on the tug. They're pretty heavy. I judge about three tons apiece."

"I see." Howie again glanced at Hennery, who smiled and nodded. He looked back at Joe and said, with a hint of regret in his voice, "Gardner says we can get the hatches in place today. Cutting off a day would save us a lot of money, Joe."

Joe flicked his cigarette into the bay and stared toward the hills and buildings of San Francisco. He asked softly, "How can he do it in one day?"

Lou Gardner stepped forward and said, "It's a cinch. It would be silly to use our crane on the tug and fish blindly for those hatches. We can use the crane down on the barge. That's what it's for, anyway. One of us can work the winch and the other can guide the hatches into place."

Joe said, "I thought of that, too."

Lou laughed. "Oh, yeah?"

"Yeah. But I don't like it. It's too risky for the guy guiding the hatch covers. No sense taking a risk like that for the sake of one day. And it might cost more in the long run."

Lou turned to Howie and said, "Of course I can't do it alone."

Howie asked, "Are you willing to work it that way, Joe?"

"No. But if you say so—"

Howie turned away from his eyes and mumbled, "That's the way I want it done."

"O. K. You're the boss."

He sat on one of the tug hatches and had another cigarette while the helpers were getting the necessary gear together. Lou Gardner, he knew, would be diving master. He had caught the almost imperceptible nod from Hennery, which meant that Gardner was his choice. And he had not failed to notice the regretful tone of Howie's voice. Howie was a good man to work for. Joe hated the thought of having to leave him. But this would be his last job. It had to be.

Already Lou was beginning to act like a diving master. He took charge of the crew and the gear and saw that everything was arranged to his satisfaction. Then he turned to Joe and said, almost as a command, "Let's get going." He added, with a laugh, "I'll guide the hatches into place myself."

Joe shrugged. He ducked back into the big helmet, saw that it was screwed on properly, then joined Lou on the diving stage. They were swung over the side and down into the water. A few minutes later they stood on the deck of the barge at the bottom of the bay. The cables, clamps, and block and tackle followed them down.

* * *

Wartime industrial accidents killed 7,000 more persons than battle wounds up to last January 1.

Workingmen's injuries since Pearl Harbor are responsible for the loss of four times as many man-hours of production as strikes.

The damage and destruction of equipment in workers' accidents far exceeds the value of American cargoes that have been sunk.

* * *

Joe and Lou went forward to the boom, against an incoming tide, and arranged the gear on the small but powerful crane. Then they went to the first open hatchway, just aft of the crane, and clamped the other end of the gear to one of the steel hatch covers.

When everything was all set, Joe touched his helmet against Lou's and said, "Be careful. Don't let that hatch swing against you."

Lou just stared at him through the forward port of his helmet, a mocking light in his eyes. Joe studied him a moment, then went forward to the crane and the winch. He turned it until he had taken up the slack in the cable, then threw all his strength against the bar. Back through the murky water he could dimly see the grotesque figure of Lou's diving suit and the faint movement of the steel cover as it slid forward. He also saw that the tide was swinging the cover and that Lou was trying to steady it. Joe stopped the winch until Lou had the cover steadied, then inched it forward again.

At the end of an hour they had the cover in place and dogged down over the hatch opening. The two of them walked back to the second hatch. Joe tapped Lou on the shoulder and pointed at a tiny line of bubbles along the right sleeve of Lou's diving suit. Lou looked at the bubbles but made no comment.

Joe leaned his helmet against Lou's and said, "I won't be able to see you down at this hatch. If the cover starts swinging I won't know it."

"Yeah, I know. How'll we work it?"

"Well, when you want me to stop, kick once on the deck. I'll feel the vibration. When you want me to start, kick twice."

Lou nodded, a faint suspicion of worry beginning to show in his eyes. "O. K.," he said. "We'll go up for lunch after this one."

After the cables were made fast to the second cover, Joe went back to the winch and quickly took up the slack. He worked the winch slowly, feeling the tug of three tons and the pull of the current. He could not see as far aft as the second hatch and Lou was invisible. But he felt the signals when Lou kicked the deck. Once there was a very long pause, and Joe was about to go aft, when Lou's signal to again start turning the winch came along the deck. Joe knew he was having trouble. Guiding three tons into place with your hands was a tricky job.

But Lou managed to get the second one over the hatch and dogged down. When Joe joined him at the line leading above he looked into Lou's helmet and saw his face covered with sweat. The line of bubbles along his right sleeve, too, had become larger. Lou's eyes slid away from Joe's as he valved more air into his suit and started up.

On the deck of the salvage tug they were helped out of their suits and the insides were examined for leaks. Lou's right sleeve had to be repaired where it had rubbed and frayed against the first hatch cover. Lou watched the repair job and nervously lit one cigarette on another. He also refused lunch. Joe ate three sandwiches, an apple, and half of an apple pie, and drank a pint of coffee.

When he was through, he turned to Howie, seated close by him. "I think," he said, "you'd better call this off and do it my way."

Howie twisted his head to stare at him, surprised. "What for? You already have two hatches covered."

"I know, but those covers swing in the tide and Gardner has come close to getting it a couple of times. If one of those hatches knocks him down he'll be crushed."

Howie blinked at Lou. "How about that, Gardner?"

Lou nervously lit another cigarette and grumbled, "It's going O. K. Sure the hatches swing, but I keep out of the way." He laughed shakily. "I'm the one to get scared, not Joe."

Joe said quietly, "You're scared to death right now."

Lou jumped to his feet and faced Joe. "You should do any talking!" he shouted. "If you were half a man you'd have offered to do half the job down there."

Joe shook his head. "It was your idea, not mine. I'm not sticking my neck out because of your cute stunts."

"Yellow—"

Joe hit him without getting up. Lou was standing close to him and Joe swung with his left hand, catching him in the stomach. Lou sat down on the deck and skidded into the scuppers. Joe sprang after him, his face turning black and his arms swinging at his sides. He caught Lou high on the shoulder just as he got to his feet and again spun him into the scuppers. Lou bounced back, bellowing like a bull. But Hennery and Reynolds and half the crew were in between them. Lou's anger subsided quickly, but it took a long ten minutes to calm Joe, whose eyes had turned a murderous red.

When Joe was finally quieted he went down to the engine room and borrowed a shot of whisky from the engineer. His wild rage died and he felt better. He returned to the deck and started pulling on his diving dress.

Lou watched him, rubbing his shoulder where he had been hit and still feeling the pain of it tingling his fingertips. It had only been a high glancing blow and yet his arm was almost paralyzed. It took a long time for the pain to die. In his eyes was the open expression of a man who suddenly realizes how lucky he is. He shuddered and turned to his diving gear.

When Joe was all dressed he turned to Lou and mumbled, like a small boy, "I'm sorry I hit you. I don't like to lose my temper that way—"

Lou shook his head. "It's all right. I guess I had it coming to me." He grinned. "I'm glad the guys stopped it."

"Sure."

"Well, let's shove off."

THEY went overboard and back down to the steel deck of the barge. When the cables were fastened to the third hatch cover, Joe returned to the winch and wound in the cable. But twice the hatch cover stuck on the coaming. It took them more than an hour to get it in place.

While they were attaching the cables to the fourth, Lou said, "The cables are longer now and have more of a snap to 'em. When the cover swings it really swings."

"You watch yourself."

"I will. I'll be glad when this one's in place."

Joe nodded and walked quickly back to the winch. The vibrations of Lou's stamped-out directions were now not so audible and took longer to travel through the water to Joe. Finally there were no more directions and Joe waited. He stamped his own lead shoes on the deck, but there was no reply. He moved down the deck to the manila line and paused to look aft. He could see nothing. He frowned and spoke into the telephone inside the helmet, "Topside!"

The telephone tender on the deck of the salvage tug replied, "Topside. What is it?"

"Where is Gardner?"

"He's still down there."

"Ask him if he's finished the job."

There was a pause, then the tender said, "He must be feeding himself a lot of air. I could hardly hear him."

"What did he say?"

"It sounded like he said he was through."

"Oh. All right, then. I'm coming up."

Joe went up to the diving stage hanging down in the water and exercised for a while to work the nitrogen bubbles out of his blood and tissues. Then he ballooned his suit and was lifted out of the water and aboard the tug. Howie Reynolds and Hennery were standing near the pumps, arguing about something. The rest of the crew was busy about its various jobs.

Joe approached Gardner's tenders and asked, "Where is he now? On the way up?"

The pump tender shook his head and replied, "He's still down there. Keeps asking for more air."

JOE frowned. "More air? I wonder—" He stepped to the pumps and examined the gauges. Air was being shot down to Gardner at a terrific rate. Joe removed his helmet and sat down. The tenders were working his lead belt loose when Gardner's telephone tender said, "Hey, you on the pumps! Gardner wants even more air."

Joe pushed his tenders away and frowned. Then he suddenly got to his feet and yelled, "Shut that air down! The guy is trapped!" Everyone aboard ship froze and stared at Joe. He was already putting his helmet back on.

Howie jumped to his side, his face suddenly gone white. "But, Joe, if he just wants more air—"

"He's trapped, I tell you. Something is squeezing him and he's using more air pressure to keep from being crushed. I'm going down. For God's sake, don't give him more air, even if he screams for it. Too much and his suit will explode. Turn it down lower than you got it."

Joe slid over the side and dropped like a rock straight to the bottom, adjusting the pressure in his suit as he went. In a few moments he was on the deck of the barge. He hurried aft and finally saw the last hatch. When he got closer he saw Lou under the cover, pinned down on the deck by the weight of three tons.

Joe squatted by the side of Lou's helmet and looked into his wide staring eyes. His lips were forming, "More air. My God, more air." Joe peered under the hatch. Lou was spread-eagled there, his diving suit ballooned out dangerously in all directions. Bubbles were escaping from the seams. Joe slid his hands along Lou's helmet and valved out a little air, before the suit should burst. Lou's agonized eyes tried to stop him. As the air was valved out, the crushing weight of the hatch cover became heavier and heavier. But Lou would have to bear that agony or face sudden death.

Joe got to his feet, valved down his own air, and spoke into the telephone: "He's trapped under the hatch. Keep his air pressure slightly above normal, but no more than that. Send me down a crowbar and a jack. Make it fast."

He walked to the manila line and took the crowbar and jack from the end of another line hanging in the water. He carried them back to Lou and placed the jack under the cover. His attempt to jack it up raised it only a few inches. Even that was some relief to Lou. Then Joe got the crowbar between the cover and the coaming and threw all of his strength into the leverage.

It moved another inch, but three tons was too much, even for Joe.

He spoke in the telephone: "Drop a cable down from your crane. The cover will have to be swung off from the tug."

In five minutes the enormous block and tackle dangling from the cables of the salvage tug's crane was banging against the side of the barge. Joe got hold of the big hook and dragged it aft to the hatch cover. He hooked it on, had the slack taken up, then told them above, "Swing it off fast and dump it overboard. Don't drag on it or it will drag across Gardner and tear his suit. O. K. Let 'er go."

He stepped aside and the three-ton hatch cover swung above his head and went overboard. Joe made a grab for Lou and quickly valved the surplus air out of his suit so that he would not float away. Lou had fainted and his nose and mouth were bleeding. Joe carried him to the manila line and rose with him up through the water, adjusting pressures in both suits.

When they reached the deck they were quickly helped out of their diving suits and rushed into the steel chamber of the recompression tank. The tug started at once to return to the pier.

Joe worked over Lou inside the tank

"Electrical storms scare hell outa me!"

and soon had him conscious and sitting up. There was nothing to do now but wait, as pressure was slowly lowered in the tank. Lou explained what had happened. Just as the hatch cover had been jockeyed into position, a movement of the current, probably caused by a passing ship, had swung the cover against Lou, who had been knocked down and had fallen under it.

Lou said humbly, "I knew you were right before that. The second hatch almost got me the same way."

Joe nodded. "It's bad business taking chances like that under water. You're lucky to be alive."

"Thanks to you." Lou held out his hand. "O. K.?"

Joe grinned. "Sure." They shook hands.

At the company pier they left the tank and got dressed. They all gathered in Howie's office. He opened a bottle of whisky and passed it around. Joe and Lou almost emptied it.

Hennery said, "Well, Gardner, I'm not trying to rub it in; but what do you think of your idea now?"

Lou said, "No good. At least, not for me."

"Or," Howie added, "the company. That hatch cover was dumped in the mud. It will take two days to get it back aboard the barge. That costs money."

The telephone rang on the desk. Howie picked it up with an impatient gesture, then smiled. He handed it to Joe. "It's for you. Your wife."

Joe took the telephone and said, "Hello, hon'."

Ruth's voice could be heard all over the room: "Joe? It's late. Why aren't you home?"

"Oh, we're just having a couple of drinks here in the office."

"Well, that's a fine thing. You could have called, you know." There was a short pause, then she said, "Joe, did you get the job?"

Joe's face turned red. "Look, hon'—"

Howie tapped him on the shoulder and whispered: "Tell her you got it."

Joe smiled. He suddenly felt good, very good. A diving master was big stuff. He said happily, "Yeah, I got it, hon'. Just now."

"Oh, Joe, I'm so glad. Gee, I'll bet you're glad to be foreman."

Joe sadly shook his head. He put the receiver back on the hook and had another drink.

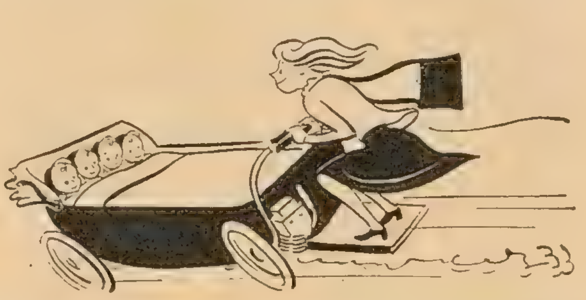
THE END

PEACH
BEANS
PICKLES
GRAPE JAM
LEO GAREL

BY MARGARET FISHBACK

Woman-Talk

TO THE RESCUE! Mrs. Muriel Bachant of New York City was tearfully frantic before she finally got help in caring for her girl triplets, born March 30 in Sloane Hospital. Mrs. Margaret Bassett, president of the Practical Nurses of New York, Inc., came to the rescue after Mrs. Bachant's lonely plight was reported by several Manhattan newspapers. The Bachant daily schedule includes preparing different formulas for each child, feeding all three at 6 A. M., 10 A. M., 2 P. M., 6 P. M., 10 P. M., and 2 A. M., not to mention bathing the brood. Mrs. Bassett agreed to go on twelve-hour duty, starting at 10 P. M., and Miss Marie Louise Mounier of the Children's Aid Society said she would be on duty from 9.30 A. M. to 6.30 P. M. until Mrs. Bachant could manage alone or get other help. Papa Bachant is a private somewhere in England. . . . The Zarief foursome, born a day ahead of the Bachants, in the same hospital, has been presented with a quadruplet Whitney perambulator by a large New York department store. Exhibited in one of the shop's windows prior to presentation, it appeared a good deal too wide for any normal sidewalk, and a good deal too big for any one person to push. What it needs is an outboard motor.

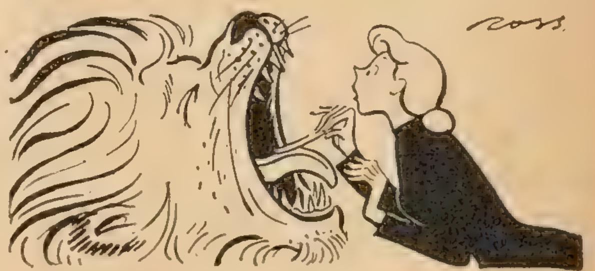


ORCHIDS TO THE FLORIST! A Newark, New Jersey, florist deserves orchids himself for using his head when he received an order from a serviceman overseas for a thirty-dollar orchid corsage to be delivered to his girl. The florist figured that was too many orchids for any feminine bosom, no matter how ample, so he made up a ten-dollar orchid corsage and sent it to the young lady, along with a twenty-dollar rosebush blooming profusely in a fine jardiniere. Conscientious to the end, he also enclosed a note explaining to the girl the change he had made in the order. It suited her fine, just as it would any woman. The female of the species has just about given up hope of ever influencing Homo sapiens to spread flowers out through the year rather than blow her to a floral offering on her birthday that looks like something for a gangster's funeral and strains the household vase situation.

MATURE'S MATURED: A recent visitor to Broadway was Victor Mature, lovingly known to womankind as that "beautiful hunk of man" when he appeared with Gertrude Lawrence in Lady in the Dark. Now a chief boatswain's mate in the Coast Guard, he seemed pleased that his fellow guardsmen have changed his nickname to that "big hunk of junk." On completing fourteen months' duty on convoy patrol in the North Atlantic, he joined the Coast Guard recruiting show Tars and Spars, which brought him to New York. With engaging frankness, he claimed that when one of his movies was shown aboard his ship, the crew walked out, but that he held his audience the next night by standing at the door with a bat. He likes the service but feels that it will take him and some 12,000,000 other men only two and a half minutes to readjust to civilian life and I say the sooner the better.

WHOLESALE HEADACHE: A recent advertisement of a New York store's drug department is unique for its candor. It read: "Can you imagine one store selling some thirty-four million aspirin tablets under its own brand in one year?" The answer is, Yes, I can. After the pushing around customers get in these labor-short, goods-short days, it's a wonder stores aren't required to serve *free* aspirin to all customers till we've heard the last merchant indignantly ask us if we don't know there's a war going on.

SPECIALISTS: Mrs. Mary Murphy of Radburn, New Jersey, has knitted well over 500 sweaters for the American Red Cross. Her local chapter furnishes the yarn and distributes her output to soldiers. Mrs. Murphy's fastest speed record is one sweater in two days. . . . Mrs. Dorothea Cornwell of Louisville, Kentucky, is a housewife who specializes in writing on the side. A novel which she completed recently has won the eighth Redbook prize of $10,000, and after appearing in Redbook Magazine this summer, will be published in book form by Dodd, Mead & Company next fall. The tentative title is They Dare Not Go a-Hunting and was suggested by the line from William Allingham's poem The Fairies, which reads, "We daren't go a-hunting for fear of little men." Mrs. Cornwell's novel started out as a short story. This failed to satisfy her, so she developed it into a novelette. Still carping, she expanded it further. Presto! A prize-winning novel! . . . The only lady zoo doctor in the United States is Patricia O'Connor, whose patients number 600 in the Barrett Park Zoo on Staten Island in New York Harbor. Animals are subject to many of the ills that human flesh is heir to, but can't say where it hurts, so Dr. O'Connor has to be a psychiatrist as well as an agile doctor. It takes a good acrobatic wrestler to treat an alligator or a lion for a sore throat! She has two children of her own, and I suspect they may have helped her work out her technique for dealing with the denizens of the jungle.



LISTEN, LADY. YOU TOO, MARINE

Continued from Page 25

simply nobody, could resist those coaxing fingertips and lips. Wags' soul tore like a rag. That didn't solve anything. He couldn't divide the rest of himself. He was a single chunk buttoned up in one skin. He was the most miserable collie in the world.

At this moment the fat lady walked in. The one with the sneezy dust and the hard high heels. "Well, flea merchant," she crowed to Gus, "you've sold a pooch."

"Eh?" said Gus.

"Gimme that pup. Soon as you said his name was Wags, I had a hunch. I put two bucks on a skate named Wigwag to come in at Tanforan—and did he pay off! Twenty to one. Here's your twenty-five for the hound."

"But I have offered twenty-five for him," asserted the girl, coming to her feet. Color burned anew in her cheeks.

"That's right," nodded Gus. "She's showed me the money. This marine's on the home stretch too. We was just letting the puppy be the judge—"

"Forty, then!" The fat lady sprang her big purse open. "All right, robber, forty-two! There! It's every cent I've got. I want that dog! With him around the flat for a mascot, what won't I do to the bookies!"

Gus looked at the money she held out. He sighed. "I guess, folks, forty-two bucks talks loudest."

THE fat lady caught Wags up. He found himself kicking and squirming in her arms. She was a drench of sticky sweet scent that almost kills a fellow with a nose.

"I'll fix a cute box for you beside my bed," she crooned in his ear. "Each evening, if it's nice, we'll walk around the block. I'll buy you a rhinestone harness and a strong chain leash."

Wags didn't mean to. The excitement did it. With a screech, the fat lady let her arms fall. Wags tumbled out. The front of her dress was darkly damp. She shrieked, "You little worm! Soon as I get you home, I'll teach you manners!" She bent and clutched fiercely, her hands closing on air. "I'll start right now!"

"No," said the girl with the blue-and-white hat. "No." Green bills still tight in her fist, she stepped between the angry woman and Wags.

Stormed the fat woman, "Will you please get out of my way! That dog's mine to do as I've a mind with!"

The girl firmly stood her ground.

Gus reminded the girl, "Forty-two dollars buys a lot of rights around here." He added, "Would you all mind stepping away from the parrot cages?"

The young man spoke up, in a voice that was gay, that was packed with sudden understanding. His words were for the fat lady and Gus, but his eyes were on the girl. On the girl, trim as a destroyer and as ready to do battle with twice her own weight.

"You two don't get the point," said the young man to Gus and the plump woman. "*We* own this dog."

"We?" Three voices joined in that.

"The lieutenant and I are the winners." He caught the girl's hand, crammed more bills into it, and shoved the whole fistful toward Gus. "Fifty outguns forty-two, doesn't it?"

"In my book it does," said Gus.

"But—but—" The girl seemed at a loss. The young man reached down and swept Wags up and popped him into her arms, where he found not one squeeze or whiff that was disagreeable.

"You can take care of him while I'm away, and I'll—er—share him a bit when I'm on furlough," the young man went on. "Or, if you prefer, we'll send him up home to the ranch till the war's over. This is going to be a real dog. An outdoor dog. Since his joint owners both love the outdoor country—"

"Do they?" asked the girl.

"Don't they?"

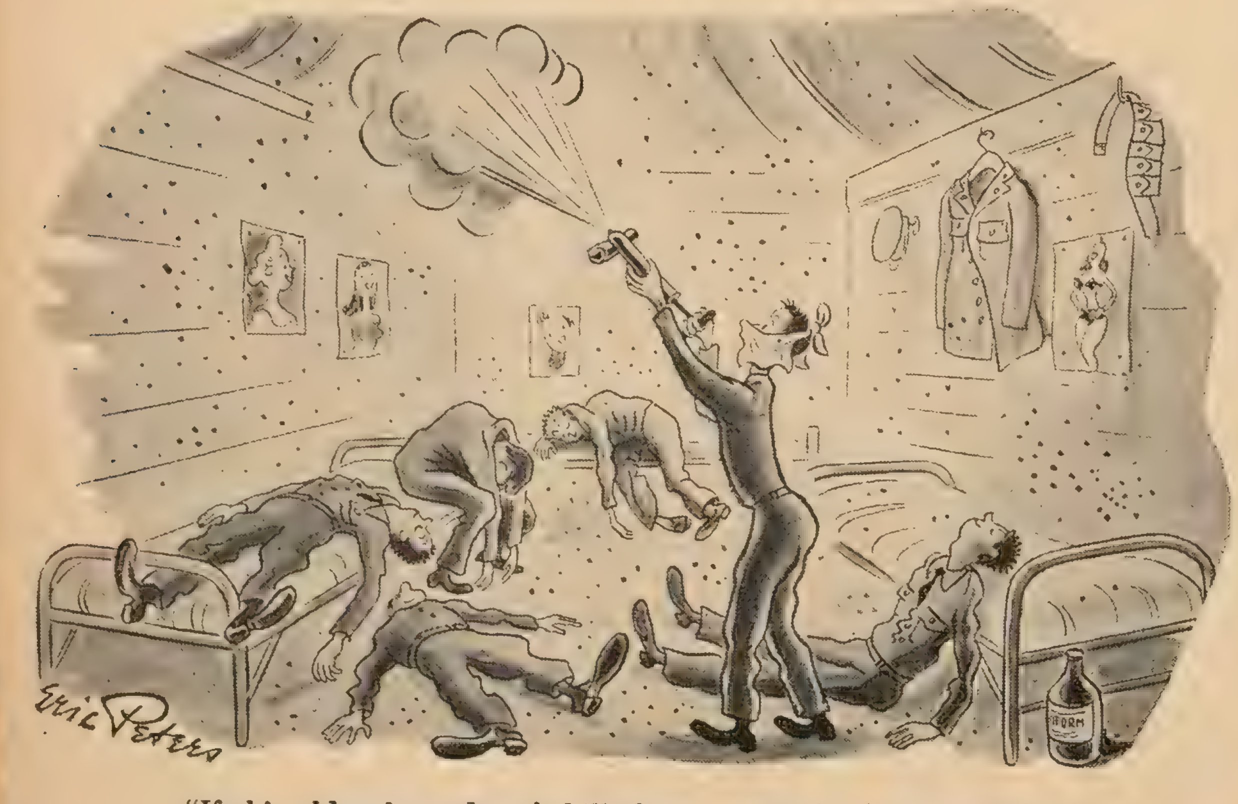
She looked at him and he looked at her. That gave Wags his chance to make a grab for what he'd hankered for all day, and he got it, too. "Oh, dear," wailed the girl, "there goes my hat! When a Wave loses her hat, she practically goes out of uniform!"

"It could be a pleasure, lieutenant," said the young man cheerfully, "helping you buy new hats. By the way, since we own a dog together, shall we swop names? I'm Robert Kenny."

"I'm Kitty Graham."

Wags let it go at that. The fat lady had flounced out. The blue-and-white hat with its bright ornament was as chewable as Wags had figured. And there wasn't a thing he had to make a decision about. Not one thing.

THE END



"If this chloroform doesn't kill those mosquitoes, nothing will."

Jane Powell, starring in Charles R. Rogers production "Song of the Open Road" for United Artists

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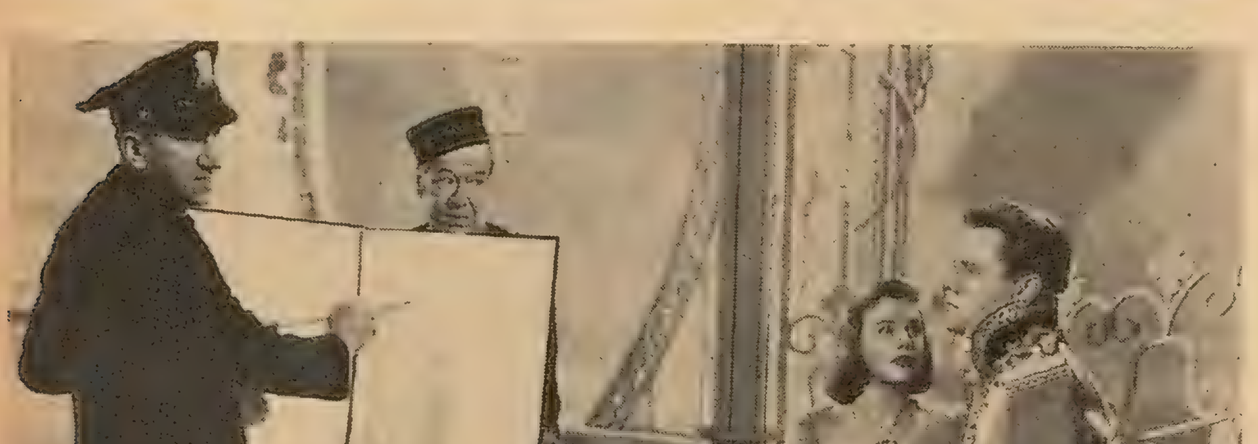
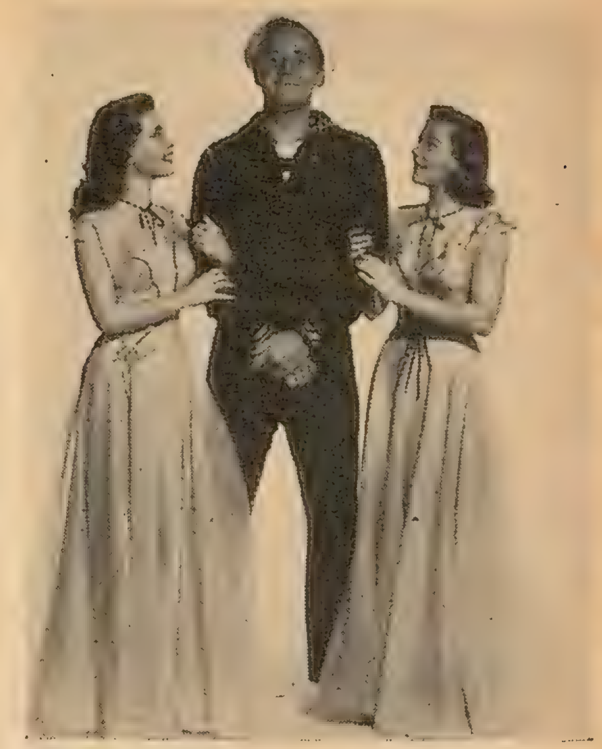
LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

Soldiers, sailors, and marines buzz around Gloria De Haven at the sisters' canteen.

Van Johnson is the sailor who can't keep his mind on sandwiches when Gloria's around.



Jimmy Durante and Donald Meek interfere with June Allyson's dream-romance.



TWO GIRLS AND A SAILOR

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)

June Allyson, Gloria De Haven,
Van Johnson, Jimmy Durante, guest stars

JUST when we were getting indigestion from an overdose of those walloping musical cavalcades, sodden with guest stars and overripe production numbers, along came this refresher and set us on our feet again. The irresistible spontaneity of a group of engaging kids has turned the old formula into something brimful of zest. (Just go prepared to shift gears rapidly from Jimmy Durante to José Iturbi to Harry James, from Xavier Cugat to Gracie Allen to Albert Coates by way of Ben Blue, and you're in for a joyful evening.)

Let's not get technical about the story—what there is of it. That's another little item the youthful principals have managed to romp away with, in spite of defects. It seems that the Deyo sisters (June Allyson and Gloria De Haven) are two little show gals who do their bit by running their own private canteen after work every night. Trusting to instinct, they entertain the nicest, lonesomest lads in uniform in their own home. But they yearn to do things in a really big way. A mysterious wealthy Somebody answers their prayer by donating a warehouse, complete with Hollywood decorations, service, and doughnuts. Soon the entire entertainment world responds with million-dollar acts which make that canteen a mighty spectacular place. But that's not half as important to Patsy (June Allyson) as the nice-looking sailor (Van Johnson) who's falling in love with sister Jean. Patsy's taken care of Jean all her life, but when it comes to love, who wants to play big sister?

Director Joe Pasternak has cannily brought out the best in his excellent cast. Sailor Van Johnson and the two girls are as fresh and natural as kids on a high-school picnic (and a lot more fun). June Allyson turns in a sincere, appealing dramatic performance in addition to her song-and-dance chores. The canteen scenes, full of naïve, true-to-life boys in uniform, are masterpieces of direction. Jimmy Durante is at his best as his nostalgic appealing self, while Gracie Allen goes long-hair in an inimitable Piano Concerto for Index-Finger. The acts come pretty thick and fast toward the end, but you can't go home till you find out who gets the sailor. Somehow those youngsters get right under your skin.

THE EVE OF ST. MARK

(Twentieth Century-Fox)
William Eythe, Anne Baxter, Vincent Price

LEGEND has it that on St. Mark's Eve a young girl may have a prophetic vision of those who will die in the coming year. If her lover is among them, his voice may reach her from far away. Maxwell Anderson used this moving bit of mysticism as the core of his famous 1942 play about a typical American boy caught in the pre-Pearl Harbor draft and carried to the Philippines on the inexorable tide of war.

The picture's excellent quality depends upon no big names. William Eythe as Private Quizz West carries over the sincerity of his performance in Bernadette, while many of the supporting players repeat their Broadway roles with skill and fine effect. Ruth Nelson as the mother and Vincent Price as Private Marion are outstanding. Anne Baxter plays the girl Quizz leaves behind. The impact of the play is somewhat diminished by the time lapse and the change of its tragic ending to a hopeful one, but the powerful human appeal remains unchanged.

1 Private Quizz West, newly inducted and on leave, tells his parents he's found the most wonderful girl in the world.

2 Quizz and his sweetheart want to make the most of his single day at home; hope to preserve its memory in a snapshot.

3 At camp, Quizz (in bunk) watches as tough Sergeant Ruby surprises a group of the boys burlesquing his drill methods.

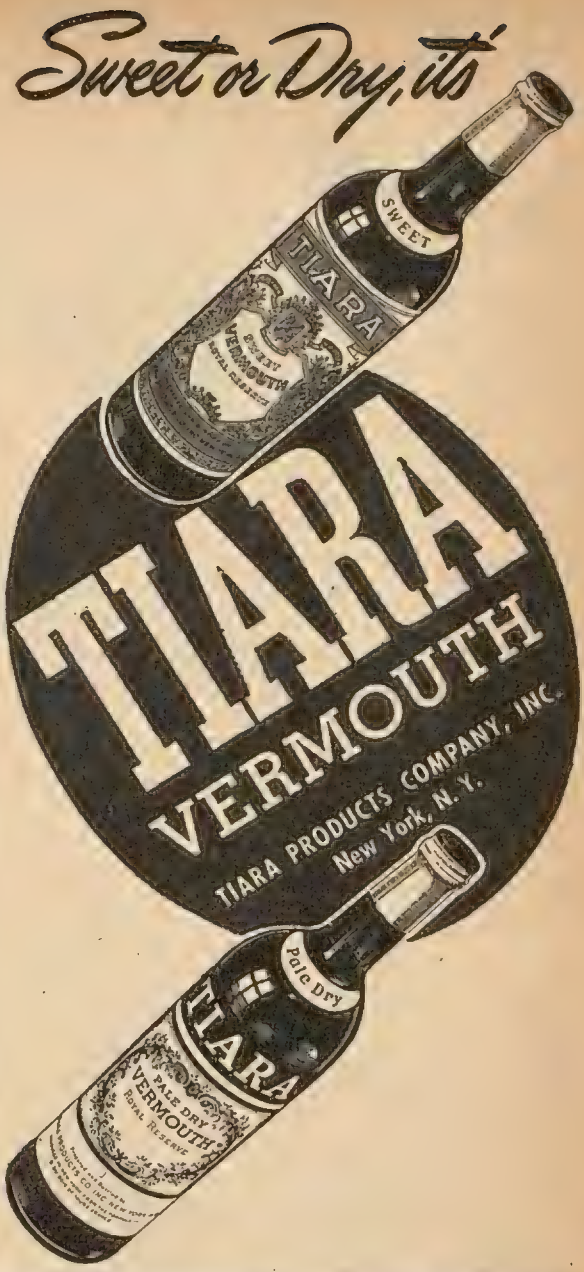
4 Quizz and his pal Private Marion run into temptation in the shape of Lil and Sal, who haunt a cheap town tavern.

5 In the Philippines, Marion is the first of the group to succumb to malaria. Trapped by Japs, the rest have little hope.

6 Quizz's sweetheart reads his last letter from the island. She and his parents still hope that he and his comrades are safe.

PICTURES WORTH SEEING

ADDRESS UNKNOWN (Columbia). Paul Lukas, Morris Carnovsky, K. T. Stevens. Drama.
AND THE ANGELS SING (Paramount). Fred MacMurray, Dorothy Lamour, Betty Hutton. Comedy.
COVER GIRL (Columbia). Rita Hayworth, Gene Kelly. Musical.
GASLIGHT (M-G-M). Charles Boyer, Ingrid Bergman, Joseph Cotten. Drama.
GOING MY WAY (Paramount). Bing Crosby, Risë Stevens, Barry Fitzgerald. Drama with music.
LADY IN THE DARK (Paramount). Ginger Rogers, Ray Milland. Drama with music.
SONG OF BERNADETTE (20th Cent.-Fox). Jennifer Jones, Charles Bickford. Drama.
THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN (Warners). Fredric March, Alexis Smith. Drama.
THE HITLER GANG (Paramount). Robert Watson and others. Documentary melodrama.
THE WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER (M-G-M). Irene Dunne, Alan Marshal. Drama.



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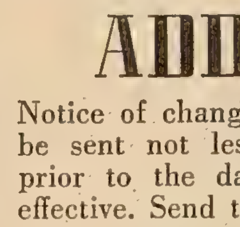
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THE WAR

ROOSEVELT'S PLACE IN WAR STRATEGY

Continued from Page 15

lification of the first principles of a civilian democracy to put military men in those posts just because they are military men.

As most people have found out for themselves, the war across the Atlantic is the Army's show, while the Navy is running things in the Pacific. That division was not made by Franklin D. Roosevelt. Nor was it made by Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, or the late Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy. And certainly Winston Churchill had nothing to do with it.

In the final analysis, as any Army or Navy officer of rank will tell you, not even General Marshall or Admiral King had much choice, because the shape of the earth was the determining factor when the United States was suddenly attacked on two sides. In Asia we are fighting a maritime power. True, Japan has huge armies on the continent and subcontinental islands of Asia, but those armies are wholly dependent upon Japan's naval strength—even Japan's troops in Burma. In Europe, we face a terrestrial power. It is the Navy's job to get our armies and their supplies safely across the ocean and to help blast landing places on the enemy-held shore, but the war in Europe will be decided by those armies, and the Navy must be the Army's servant in that task.

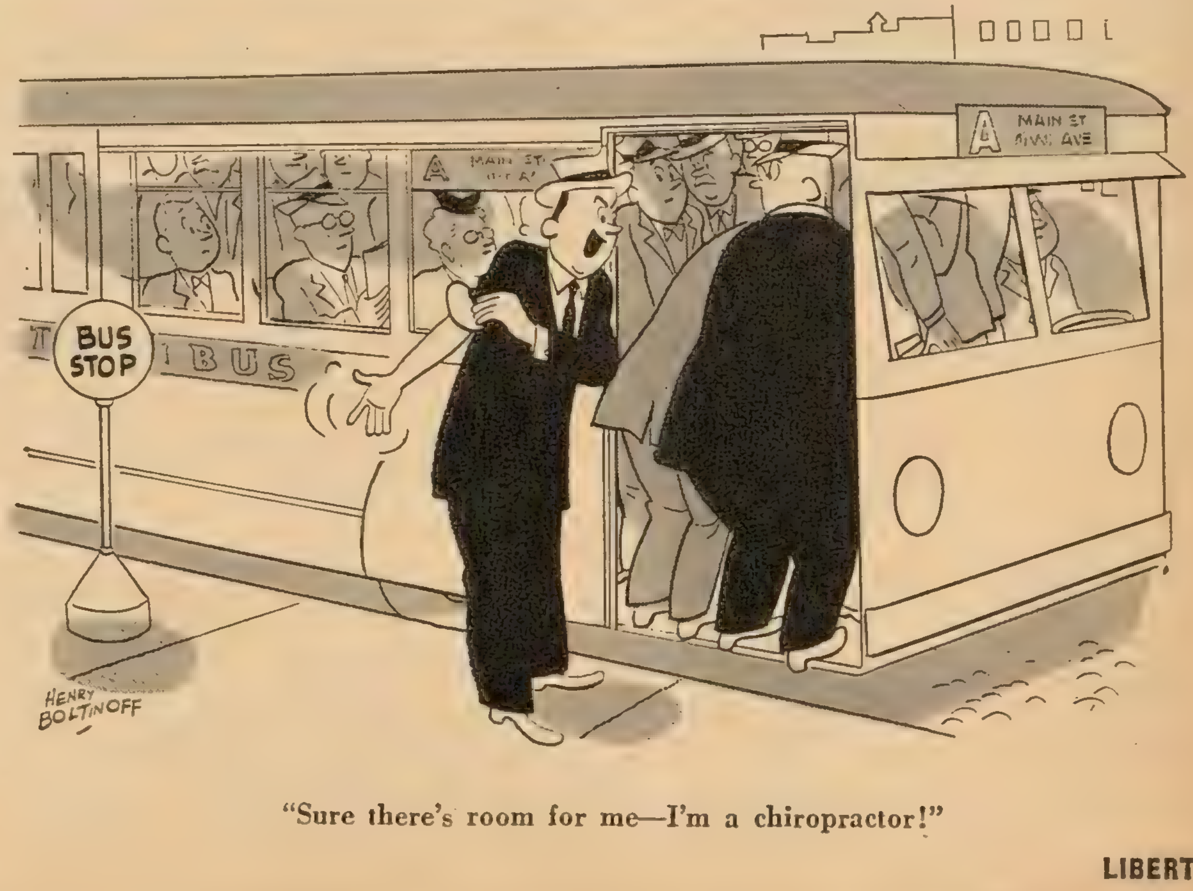
As Walter Lippmann said recently: "The fundamental decisions which were once military secrets are no longer secrets. The main concentration of our force against Japan is in the Central Pacific: the tactics and the weapons may be new, but the basic plan of the campaign was adopted by the Navy many years ago. The main concentration of our force against Germany is for invasion of continental Europe: the high command of the Army has always insisted that the German army could be defeated in no other way. There have been alternate and conflicting views in this country and abroad as to how the war should be fought. From Pearl Harbor to Teheran there have been many discussions, some compromises and some deviations. But in the end the long-standing orthodox professional views of the Navy and the Army have prevailed."

Now, these "long-standing orthodox professional views" were being shaped in Washington before Roosevelt entered the White House. They were being formed and practiced in maneuvers and war games before the names of Marshall and King were known outside of their own coterie of officers. More than a generation ago General Hugh S. "Iron Pants" Johnson was sent to the Far East to help chart American counter-measures to an attack by some Asiatic power, and he came to the conclusion that "there is no faint chance for anything but defeat and humiliation in any attempt by us to defend the Philippine Islands."

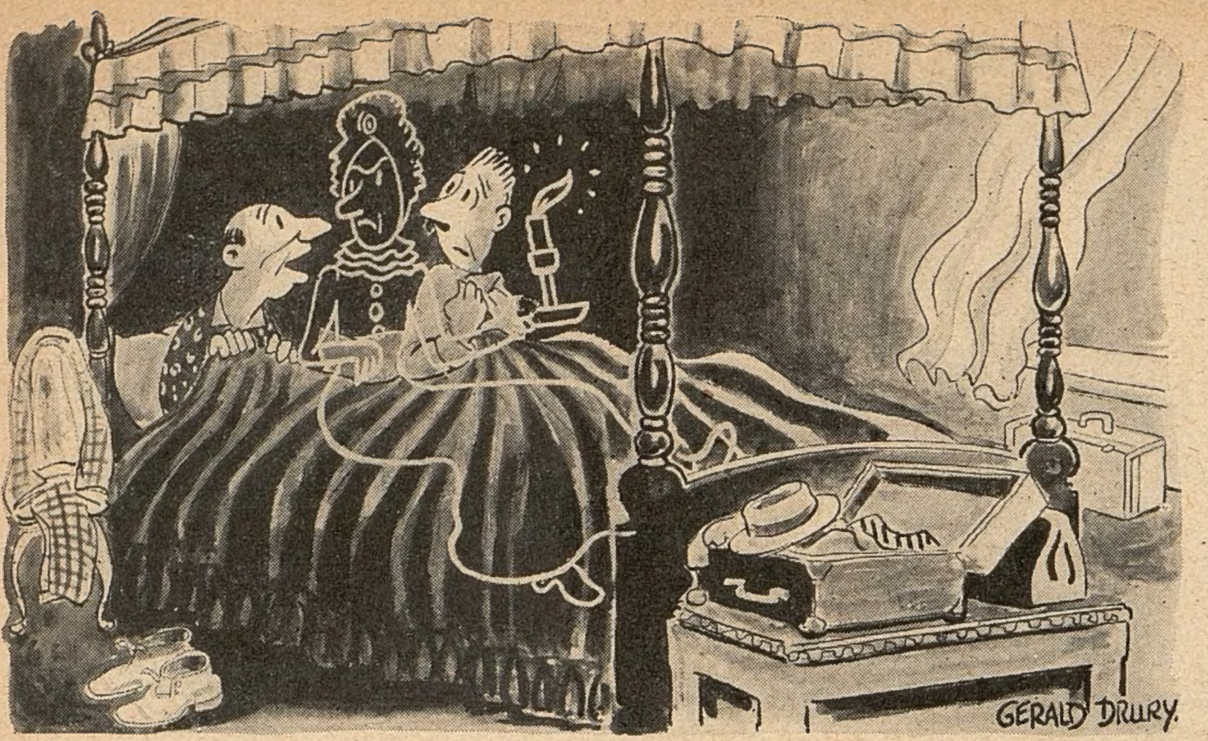
Our career officers in the Army and the Navy do not remain idle between wars. Even when Congress cuts their pay, deprives the Navy of powder for target practice, and forces the Army to drill with wooden guns, the Army and the Navy are studying, studying, studying. Ask any newspaperman whose beat is the War Department or the Brooklyn Navy Yard. General Marshall and Admiral King, as junior officers, participated in those studies and inherited the good, sound fruit of all the planning of the peace years when the nation and Congress strove to forget the last war and refused to believe in the inevitability of another.

TO say that the Army and the Navy are fighting the kind of war their top men want is not meant to imply that they found themselves in the kind of war they had expected to wage when December 7, 1941, dawned. The Navy always knew that in a war with Japan, the course of action would lie straight across the Central Pacific. It did not expect Pearl Harbor, and after that catastrophe the Navy had to wait until it could build ships and train the crews for the kind of war that has to be fought to defeat Japan.

Nor did the Navy anticipate a Japan entrenched in Java, Sumatra, Singapore, or the Solomon Islands. That the Japs are there, astride the equator, is a nuisance which affects but does not alter the essential strategy of driving straight across the Pacific. That is why MacArthur has command of the area in the lower left-hand corner of the Pacific map. He was put there to hold Australia. The Navy blasted a life line across the Pacific to keep MacArthur's troops fed, munitioned, and replenished while it got its Marines



"Sure there's room for me—I'm a chiropractor!"



"I thought there must be something queer about an empty hotel room on a Saturday night."

organized to take Guadalcanal, and its fleets assembled on the now history-making pattern of the battleship-carrier team which is slicing the Japs' Pacific right in two.

General Marshall saw it that way, too. Any war in the Pacific that is not to be fought out on the soil of California has to be a naval war.

By the same token, Admiral King assumed without debate that the war against Germany and Italy had to be an Army show, in which the Navy's part would be a fetch-and-carry operation, as it was in the last European war. The Army's preparations for a foreign war have always been dedicated to the necessity of keeping the enemy out of the United States. During the time when it appeared that half the country was screaming for the "second front" while the other half was shrilly protesting against any plan to "send American boys to die in a European quarrel," the military high command was preparing to do just what it is doing. But it had to train the armies and to equip them, season them in realistic maneuvers, and harden them on secondary battle fronts before putting on the main show.

AND neither Roosevelt nor Churchill had had anything to do with that. They met in Washington, in Quebec, in Casablanca and Cairo and Teheran, and they met with Stalin and Chiang Kai-shek and De Gaulle; but they met, in the main, to preside at the conferences of their military and naval executives. The decisions reached, as far as military and naval operations go, were, with minor alterations, the ones predetermined by General Marshall and Admiral King. That is pretty well intimated in the lengthy reports recently issued by those two tight-lipped leaders, and it will be proved when the official histories of the war are written from documents now secret.

The British have to mix politics with their wars because it is part of the between-wars security of the United Kingdom to have a balance of power in Europe. It will be remembered that the British themselves, short of men and shy of equipment, sent troops into Norway and Greece on expeditions that were known to be hopeless but would win the respect and post-war loyalty of the Norwegians and Greeks for Britain.

Now, take it for gossip you must, but apparently the British wanted the United States to put troops into the Balkans on similar missions of political morale after Africa was cleared of the Italo-German armies. The American military leaders—nothing is said of how President Roosevelt sided—would not deviate from their belief that the way to beat Italy was inside Italy, and the way to beat Germany was inside Germany. And so much for politics at the military-naval council tables in Washington.

Where President Roosevelt and the New Dealers have injected their ideas into the war is in the creation of the lend-lease system, but even there the military and naval professionals insist that they have retained control over the disposition of *military* and *naval* items. The Republic of Graustark may sign the United Nations pact and the government of the United States may bestow upon its new ally bacon and corn meal, but Graustark gets only the guns and airplanes and reconditioned warships that the Army and Navy know *they* can spare and that will be used to good effect in the war.

Army and Navy watchdogs who know the countries they are dealing with see to that.

It would appear, then, that the admirals and sea captains, the generals and the colonels are right when they privately pound the table and snort that the more the Republicans and the Democrats talk about the war as a campaign issue, the greater the disservice the politicians do the nation. They divert public attention and debate from the real issues, which are the everlasting and perennial ones of economy, efficiency, and honesty in the domestic government, and the soundness of its political relations with foreign governments.

"But one can't rise up and proclaim that," said the admiral. "Otherwise, you see, we would be putting the war into politics in seeking to keep politics out of the war."

THE END

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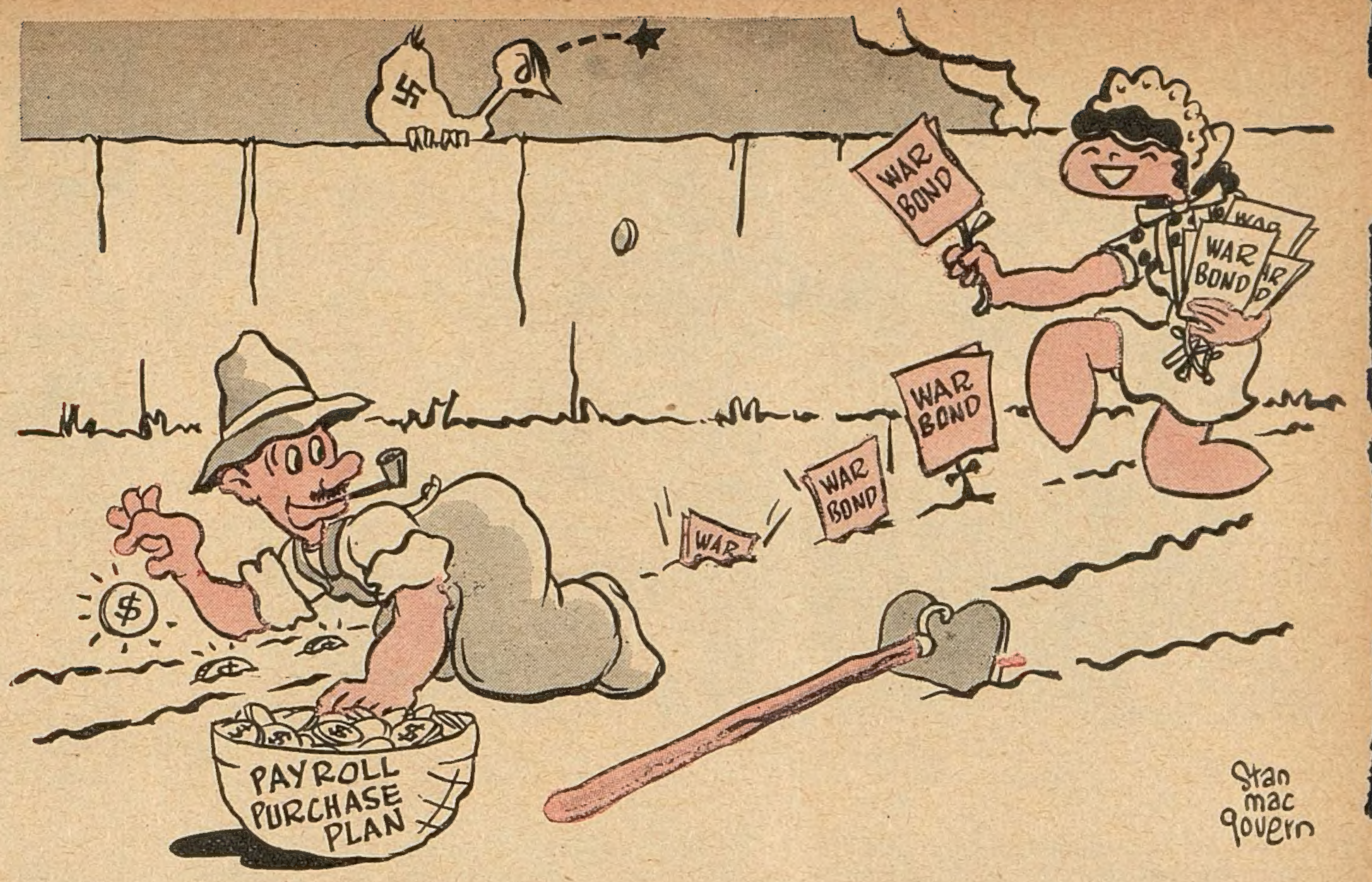

BUYING BONDS IS FUN

GUEST EDITORIAL

BY BERTON BRALEY

WAR is a grim business, and it's hardly appropriate to talk about fun in connection with it. But there's no denying the big kick in watching Series E Bonds pile up in a lockbox.

Take my own case, for example. For a payday or two the 15 per cent off my check took a little getting used to, but it really wasn't so tough. I—we, rather, for I'm married—peeled off a few luxuries from our budget, sliced down here and there, and by the time the third bond-deduction payday arrived, didn't notice the difference. Sacrifices? Deprivations? My eye!—and we get along all right and the 15 per cent is pure velvet. My Lord, how the War Bonds roll in!

And all without effort on my part. I feel as though an automatic machine is grinding out bright new crinkly bonds for me; stacks of savings that just grow while I sleep.

Fun? I'll say.

Fun to feel we can spend my whole pay check, if necessary, and not worry about a rainy day, because our umbrella is provided for.

Fun—after years of fretful improvidence—to feel snug and thrifty, and do it without any strain.

Fun not to have to budget for savings (and then fail), but to have the cashier doing the job for me while all I do is pack away the bonds.

Fun, too, to feel my money is in there fighting, even if I'm too old, and that my surplus isn't entering into the kind of competition for scarce goods that tends toward inflation.

It's so much fun that when I get a raise I put it into more bonds. Why not? The more the merrier. We were doing fine on my former salary, minus deductions.

In fact, every so often I find I can put something over on myself by slipping an extra $18.75 out of the jeans and slipping an extra bond in with the regular quota of bond "dividends."

For they are just that—dividends. By counting as salary only what I get after bond deductions and taxes, those light green documents with Henry Morgenthau's signature on them constitute a very nice net profit that gets netter every month. I don't know exactly how much that profit is. Deliberately, and for the fun of it, I simply put the bonds away without counting them. Maybe after a while I'll find I've got more than I thought I had.

Yes, buying bonds is fun! If you forget what your pay was before the bonds came out of it, and count only what you actually get, it's so easy and painless you don't feel it.

Of course, if you want to consider bond-buying a serious duty which gives you satisfaction only if it hurts, go ahead and buy them grimly and in a spirit of self-sacrifice. Maybe you'll buy more that way, though I doubt it.

But I can't see where buying the solidest securities in the world, and getting darn good interest on my money, is any martyrdom. To me the more bonds I buy the more fun it is.

The boys doing the stern and funless job of fighting the war for us will be pretty pleased to know that we're not stewing and griping over buying the bonds that arm and feed them, but instead are getting good, clean fun out of stowing away all the Series Es we can!

Liberty
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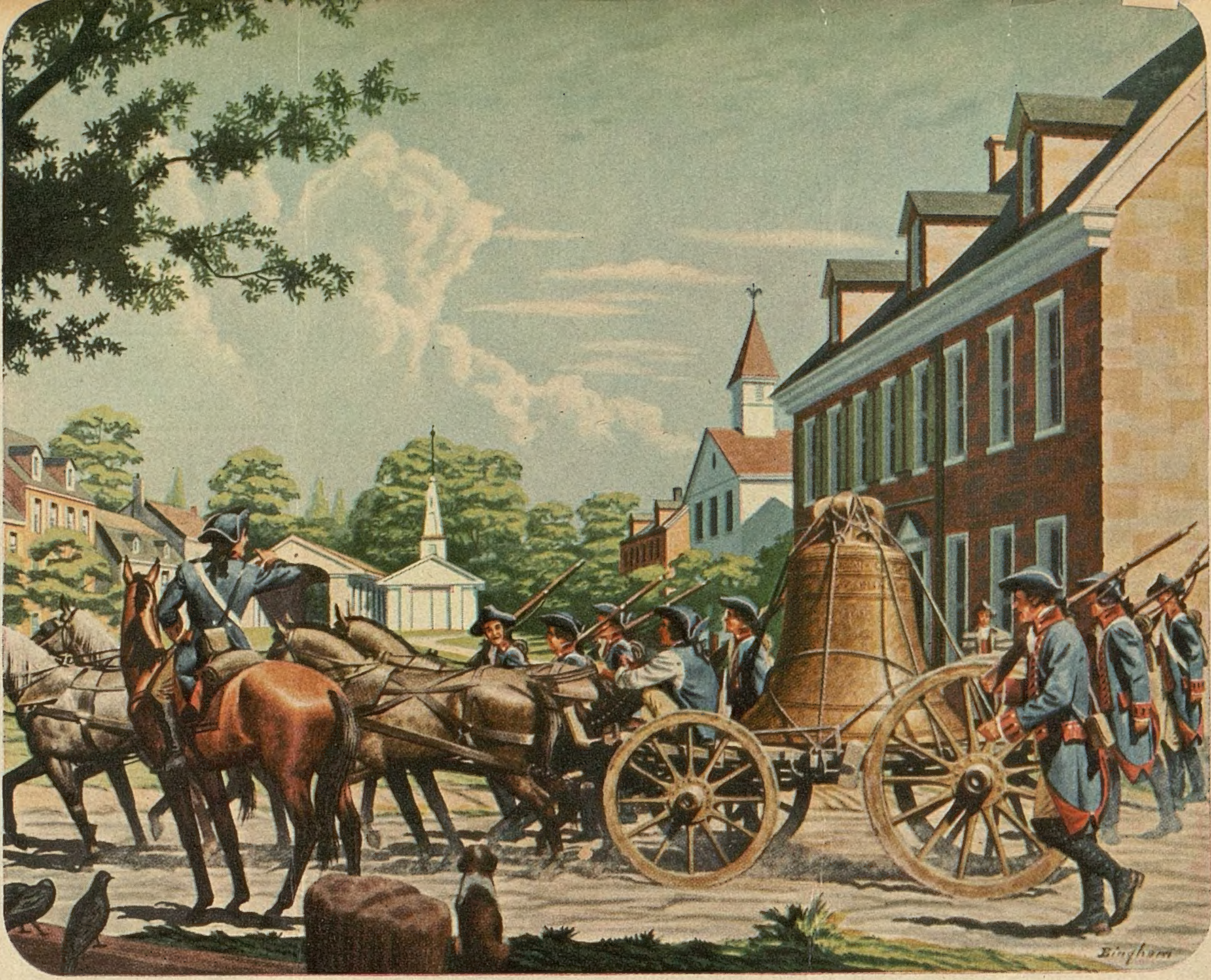

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